

DAYS IN ATTICA



MRS R. C. BOSANQUET

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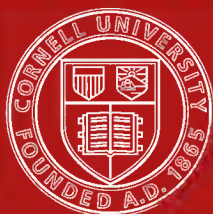
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DAYS IN ATTICA



THE PROPYLAEA FROM WITHIN
FROM A WATER-COLOR DRAWING BY T. V. DOUGLAS

DAYS IN ATTICA

BY

MRS. R. C. BOSANQUET

WITH 17 ILLUSTRATIONS AND 3 PLANS

NEW YORK
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1914

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TO
T. H.

PREFACE

SINCE these chapters were written the Greek nation has entered upon a new phase. The Balkan War is over, and it is still too soon to estimate all the results; but even the extension of the kingdom is of secondary importance when compared with the new provinces which recent years have added to the national character—reserve, forethought, self-denial. These qualities are not the results of the war. The successes of the Greek nation, when suddenly called upon to take up arms, were the fruit of a preliminary period of self-discipline. It was the new Greek who heralded the new Greece.

Since Mr. Venizélos came into power such important changes have come about that the nation seems transformed. The Constitution has been revised, criminal law amended, the army and navy remodelled, and the police service reformed. Above all, the civil service has been made permanent and independent of party—a change which involved sacrifices on the part of men of all classes. In a country notorious for its frequent changes of ministry Venizélos' Government, after four years of office, is stronger than ever; in fact, the old party divisions have been broken down by a new national consciousness.

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DAYS IN ATTICA

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INTRODUCTORY

TRAVEL IN GREECE

A CENTURY ago the tide of travel left Greece high and dry. Athens possessed but one tavern, and the few adventurers who came usually stayed with their consul or lodged with the French Capuchins in the monastery that then enclosed the Monument of Lysicrates. Now there are half a dozen first-class hotels, many smaller ones, and a few modest *pensions*. French fashions, English medicines, and German hardware are all seen in the main streets of the town.

Yet Greece is still a remote land. Tourists do not come here as readily as to Italy or Egypt; the Greek himself speaks of "going to Europe" and distinguishes between "European" and "native" goods. The Balkan highlands detach Greece from the rest of the continent, and to all intents and purposes she is an island. It is hoped that in a few years' time the railway which is already completed as far as Larisa will be continued to Salonika, where it will join the European system. For the present the three main routes to Athens are by Brindisi, by Marseilles, and by Constantinople. The most direct line with the shortest sea voyage

is via Brindisi. By this route the mails from London to Athens take something under five days. From Brindisi to Patras is a two days' voyage; from Marseilles to the Piraeus five days. The journey by Constantinople is the most costly, but it is comfortable and speedy. There is a good service of steamers between Constantinople and Athens, the fastest taking about two days.

Climate.—In spite of its nearness to the sea, the climate of Athens is continental rather than marine in its extremes of temperature. In the three hottest months of summer the thermometer stands at about 95° in the shade, though this heat is made bearable by a cool breeze from the sea at evening. For the other nine months of the year the wind usually blows from the land, that is from the cold Balkan mountains. The plain of Athens is sheltered to some extent by its circle of hills; it is only when these are themselves snow-covered that the cold is intense. It is strange that the average Athenian house is built without heating apparatus. Not till Parnes shows a snowy cap does the householder bestir himself to buy a stove. The ideal time for visiting Greece is April or May; but the other months may well be enjoyed by one prepared for varieties of temperature. The variability of the Athenian climate will prevent the town from becoming a winter health resort, although the weather does not change from day to day as in England. For better or worse the sunshine or the rain persists for at least ten days at a time. Yet from season to season it is impossible to prophesy what will be in store. I have known a winter made up of a succession of balmy days; another with black frost lasting for weeks, and a third with months of steady rain. In April especially a sample of all kinds of weather may be expected. The traveller must be content to take a supply of both winter and summer clothing.

Hotel Life.—The cost of living in Athens is relatively

high, and the terms quoted by the large hotel-keepers seem exorbitant until we remember that for the moment Athens has outgrown its sources of supply. Vegetables, fowls, game, and other things that used to be plentiful are now rather scarce. In all probability this condition of things will not last long, since capital readily finds its way into these safe enterprises that cater for the needs of a growing town.

There is increasing competition among hotel-keepers. Within recent years a number of large new hotels have been opened, which give a varied choice of quarters. The "European" hotels in the neighbourhood of Constitution Square are just such as may be found in any other capital. On the other hand a traveller who wishes to see something more typically Athenian will find many possible hotels in the lower end of the town around Concord Square. Here he may obtain a clean bedroom and choose a restaurant suited to his purse. It is not usual for Greek families to take boarders. This, which often proves a pleasant plan in other countries, is here difficult to arrange and not always successful.

Travel with a dragoman is in Greece much the same as in any other land. For a fixed sum (usually 40 francs a day per person) the dragoman takes you wherever you wish to go, finds the mules or carriages, takes beds and a cook (or cooks himself), and arranges a comfortable lodging at the end of each day's journey.

People who cannot stand irregular hours and uncertain diet will find this the right way to travel. With a dragoman they can enjoy, not only the more obvious train and steamer routes, but also the beautiful mountain passes of the interior. Yet some of the true delights of travel must be sacrificed. Those who journey carrying with them the resources of civilization can never know the elemental joys that link us to a vanished age :

the combat with hunger and weariness, the pleasurable dependence on the will of an unknown folk, the exhilaration of uncertainty in approaching the outskirts of that little town which for a whole hot afternoon has shone before us on the hills like a far white star ; the excitement of weighing the chances of our night's lodging as we sit at dusk in the village square sipping black coffee and wondering when the friendly crowd will finish its questions and bestir itself to find the man whose house shall receive us. "These people wash themselves every day. They have lead on their boots. The little one has gold in his mouth." Such are the awestruck whispers that reach our ears.

You who travel "personally conducted" cannot come into real contact with the country people. The most honest dragoman inevitably slides into the rôle of assuming that he is your protector and that all the country people are rogues. Your intercourse with them must be through him. The more he can exalt your position, the more he shines in reflected glory. Finally, you find yourself posing in lonely isolation as the English *lordos*. The children are rebuked for shyly touching your hands, and you miss many naïve inquiries as to your wardrobe, your status, and your family. To lose any opportunity for getting on friendly terms with the Greek peasant is a real loss, for no man is more simple and courteous than he is in his own home.

Travel without a dragoman is yearly becoming easier. There is now no part of Greece where a foreigner with a few words of modern Greek may not go. A few routes are suggested in Baedeker, but every man will be wise to make his own itinerary and take with him just enough of the necessities of life to enable him to face the luck of the road. As he goes along he will devise his own resources for comfort and despise those of

others. The suggestions offered here are intended only for those who have as yet done no travelling in Greece.

Whether you walk or ride, you will need an animal to carry your pack. Mules or small ponies may be found at almost every village. You take a fresh animal at each stage, and the muleteer who goes with you acts as your guide for the day. His fee is included in the sum arranged for the use of the mule, but it does no harm to let him know that if he gives satisfaction there will be an additional tip at the end of the journey. On the disposition of this *agoyatis* depends much of your day's happiness. Usually he is a pleasant person, cheery and resourceful. Occasionally you will come across one who shows his resource by charging for unexpected extras, as in the story told by the scholiast on Demosthenes, where the *agoyatis* makes one charge for the mule and another for the mule's shadow in which the traveller had made his noonday halt.

Three great annual fasts are observed by the Greek Church, forty days before Christmas, forty days before Easter, and forty days before the Feast of the Assumption in August. When planning a journey which will coincide with one of these (it must be remembered that a Greek calendar is necessary), you should carry your own supplies, to vary the otherwise monotonous repetition of fowl, eggs, and cheese.

In the Peloponnese it is well to be provided with a private store of food at all times of the year. As butter is almost unknown, a jar of marmalade is worth carrying. Except for those who delight in the hardships of travel, a portable bed is almost a necessity. The bed in the village inn is often nothing but a quilt spread on the floor, and the quilt will seldom bear inspection. In all cases a light rug and a pillow are essential for use by day and night. The pillow should have a removable outer cover of American leather or dark washing material.

With the rug it forms a pad for the hard wooden saddle of the mule, and at night the clean pillow is slipped out of its case. A small set of washing apparatus must be taken also. In an otherwise comfortable lodging there is often no arrangement for washing.

Where possible put up at the house of the best man in the village rather than at the village inn; in small places the *khan* is the dirtiest house in the town. You need have no scruple in asking for a lodging in the best house you see. The Greek peasant is at heart truly hospitable, and if you do not impress him as an exacting guest he will do his utmost to make you comfortable. He will open his best wine, send his wife into the loft to fetch the last fresh walnuts, and will load your plate with *mizethra* (fresh cheese) and honey. In moderately well-to-do villages you will often be given meat for the evening meal. In the middle of the day the peasant does not himself eat meat, and does not expect his visitor to want it. It is safe to ask for macaroni, and a rice *pilaf*; these are favourite dishes and are well prepared. *Giaourti*, a Turkish dish of curds, is refreshing in the middle of the day. The coarse country bread is delicious; in some parts of Greece there is nothing but barley-bread, which may be some weeks old and must be soaked in water before it can be eaten. Oranges are abundant from Christmas to Easter; eggs are always available, and there is often a variety of fresh vegetables. The resinous flavour of the country wine is detestable to most of us; the country water is purer than that found in Athens. When in doubt, order black coffee. This and *loukoumi* (Turkish delight) are to be had at wayside *khans* where there may be nothing else; the sticky sweet is sustaining and not unwholesome. A solid breakfast is, of course, unknown. Eggs and hot milk should be ordered overnight; otherwise you will find a Greek breakfast of black coffee and rusks. Cows' milk is rarely

found ; sheep's milk is sweet and creamy, goats' milk better than its reputation.

The resources of the country are simple, but they are readily set at your disposal. Foreigners are still popular and are pre-eminently well treated. At places quite on the beaten track you may be troubled by beggars, but compared with other countries in Southern Europe Greece is free from this plague. If it is now on the increase travellers have only themselves to blame. A supply of cigarettes and small gifts come in useful as recompenses for the services offered freely in friendship. Unless thoroughly acquainted with the national idiom it is safer not to compromise your dignity by gratuitous condescension. Familiarity from a stranger is neither appreciated nor understood. In the country the manner of the well-bred is a combination of gravity and courtesy. Jocularities should follow only at a later stage of acquaintance.

Unfortunately there are now scattered through Greece—especially Laconia—a class of people of whom these remarks do not hold good. These are the Greeks who have returned from America. They have finished their business cares as fruit-sellers or ice-cream men, and have returned home either wealthy or penniless to finish their days in fame and idleness at their native café. There is no road so lonely that we may not suddenly be greeted by a jaunty billycock and a cheeky grin : "Say, are you fellahs fr'm Chicago?" or, "Good-day, boss ! Gimme a smoke." These encounters grate on the nerves, but are often kindly meant, and at the worst show only a vain officiousness. The Americanized Greek is a great person in his own town, and he welcomes this opportunity of spreading his plumes before his fellow-townsmen. It is hard if we curtly turn aside and do not allow him to parade his knowledge of the foreigners' language, and if we deny him the pleasure of ordering about his neighbours on our behalf.

The carriage for country work is a landau solidly built. It travels slowly but is not uncomfortable. It is a pity that there are not more carriage roads in Greece. Possible driving tours are very limited, though even as it is the Greek driver does cross-country work that would dismay an English coachman. Motor roads are few.

The most independent way of travelling is to bicycle. It is not an ideal country for cyclists, but there are some very good roads, notably the ride from Tripolitza to Sparta. Mr. Richardson (late Director of the American School in Athens) has written a paper on "The Bicycle in Greece,"¹ in which he emphasizes the shortness of the distance from point to point, and says, "any good bicyclist would find it no great matter to leave Thebes and pay his respects to Athens on the first day, visit Corinth and Argos on the next, and sleep comfortably at Sparta the next night."

It must be remembered, however, that in bad weather even the best roads get broken and there may be places where it is necessary to carry the bicycle. In case of mishaps it is better not to attempt a bicycle tour alone. For the solitary traveller mule-riding is preferable, as this implies the company of a muleteer.

Railway travelling in Greece is very easy. There are few railways; there is no through traffic, and seldom a crowded station. The carriages are comfortable; the trains go at a quiet pace and keep good time. They pass through some of the most beautiful scenery in Greece. Nobody should miss the journeys from Corinth to Athens, and from Athens to Chalcis, both possible expeditions for a single day.

Travel by Sea.—To visit the outlying parts of Greece you must make use of every class of boat. The first-class liners usually touch only at Corfu, Patras, and Piræus.

¹ R. B. Richardson, "Vacation Days in Greece." Smith, Elder & Co.

Coast towns on the mainland and some of the larger islands are served by second-class European boats ; places of less importance by Greek steamers and sailing boats (*caïques*). The steamers that I have called "second-class European boats" are the smaller or older vessels of the well-known lines. They are cargo boats, slow and reliable, not carrying many first-class passengers. They remind one sometimes of the old-fashioned English inn on a deserted coaching road, that maintains a tradition of cleanliness and respectability for the few travellers who still make use of it. I always enjoy these boats for the variety of passengers on board : prosperous islanders returning to their homes, their smart wooden boxes, ornamented with gold paper and brass-headed nails ; peasants carrying their large bundles in the striped red and white rug of native manufacture ; perhaps a Greek priest full of local information and ready to offer the hospitality of his monastery at the end of half an hour's talk ; a minor Turkish official travelling with his harem to Janina ; a Greek police-officer coming to take up his duties in Crete now that the Italian gendarmerie is withdrawn ; or a group of booted Cretans going as a gang of workmen to mines or railway.

Travel on the little native steamer is altogether less desirable. However, in the Greek islands the distances from point to point are short, and it is no great hardship to put up for one night with a dingy cabin or a close saloon where the oil-lamp swings viciously with each movement of the boat. On these steamers you must be prepared to supply your own food, for "the eating is not in the ticket" (as I once heard it phrased). They run fairly regularly—that is to say, within one or two days of their advertised times—and are generally small and old. I remember making the voyage from Syra to Athens in a little 50-ton boat that had started life as an English yacht, somewhere in the forties. It had been sold at a sacrifice

"because the owner's bulldog died on board." I suspect that there were also other reasons less strictly sentimental. But in good weather even these Greek steamers can give you pleasant journeys. There are mild nights when you can sleep in your long chair on deck; there are hours of cheerful conversation on the bridge where the captain always makes you welcome; and a cup of black coffee does not make a bad breakfast when served to the tune of an *Ægean* sunrise.

Travel by *caïque* is only possible in the summer, and even then much time may be wasted by calms and storms. I do not speak from personal experience, and I fancy that to enjoy it you must have something of the fatalistic Eastern temperament as well as a good constitution. I am told that without some experience of this sort it is impossible to understand the spirit of the *Odyssey*.

One of the great characteristics of Mediterranean travel is the use of small boats for landing. In many cases it is impossible for the steamer to come alongside the quay, but there are plenty of big ports where the custom only continues because the boatmen are sufficiently formidable to make it very uncomfortable for any company that allows its passengers to land without their aid. I wonder how long this benighted state of things will be allowed to last. In Marseilles and even Naples more modern methods are used, and where the companies cannot bring their boats to the landing-stage they will send out their own tenders for the use of the passengers.

I have made no mention of the large steamers run by English and German companies which now take pleasure cruises round coasts of the Mediterranean hitherto almost inaccessible. Travellers on these boats find themselves so well looked after that they need no advice of mine.

For health a few precautions are necessary, and these are hardly peculiar to Greece. Suitable clothing may

make a heavy pack, but it is essential to have a sufficiency of extra wraps. The difference in temperature between morning and evening is often emphasized by a difference in altitude. Perhaps you start from the plain in morning sunshine. As you climb the heat becomes unbearable; yet the evening may find you some 4,000 feet up on Taygetus or Parnassos, and the end of the ride comes after sunset by damp rocks or through woods that have been in shade all the day. Your own vitality is lowered by the day's exertion, and, unless you wrap yourself up, the next day's ride will be cut short by chills or fever. With sufficiently warm clothing the sunset hour is not to be dreaded, except in the few marshy and malarious districts such as those in the neighbourhood of Kopaïs. The mosquito is, of course, the traveller's worst enemy. After April a mosquito net should be carried. The river beds are breeding grounds for malaria. A bathe among the oleanders at the end of a long day's ride is more alluring than prudent. If you follow simple precautions, do not get over-tired, and take quinine freely through the hot weather, you may rejoice in your travel without thought of fever. A few days in Athens between each journey send you back to country life with new strength and vigour.

A chapter on travel in Greece would be incomplete without some mention of brigandage. Although the days of brigandage are over, there are still brigands in Greece; that is to say, there are large tracts of desolate country in which outlaws are hiding from justice. Where the Englishman drinks himself stupid, the Greek drinks himself furious. The sudden flare-up of a vinous quarrel usually ends in knives being drawn. One man falls. His opponent flies to the hills, often without waiting to see whether he has killed his man. The police pursue him, of course, but he has had a good start. His neighbours are too sympathetic, too conscious of their own fallibility

to reveal his whereabouts. In half the cases of this kind the murderer gets clear away. Hereafter he has a miserable life, getting such food as he can by preying on a poor neighbourhood. In the end he either dies of starvation, takes ship to America, or in despair gives himself up to justice. A price is put on his head and occasionally he is shot.

The fact that there is a lawless element at large in lonely places should not be ignored by the traveller, but the thought need never disturb his peace of mind. These outlaws are solitary men ; two may sometimes be found together, but as a rule there is no combination, no concerted action, and no capital to back them. Without these things they can never become formidable. Such brigandage as there is need not affect Europeans, for the foreigner is well taken care of. Should the country be unsettled, as may happen near the frontier or round the Vale of Tempe, he will be warned, and an escort sent with him. "It is too expensive to touch a European," says the hungry outlaw with a regretful sigh.

CHAPTER I

CRETE

I

THE NORTHERN PORTS

CRETE in the sunrise! That is where Greek history begins in the books, where it begins also for the happy traveller who can approach Greece by way of Crete. In travelling it is not always easy to make the most logical approach to your subject. Steamers and railways have a habit of disregarding history and sentiment, and those who care enough about obtaining the right sequence of impressions will find that they must forsake the main routes of travel. At the present time the simplest way of reaching Greece via Crete is to take one of the smaller Messagerie boats that run fortnightly from Marseilles to Canea, the capital of Crete, or an Austrian-Lloyd boat starting from Trieste.

The first sight of the island is unforgettable. You step from your dark cabin in the early morning and find yourself in a luminous upper world, threaded with grey lines of zephyrous cloud and distant coastland. The newly-washed deck mirrors the glory, and the ship becomes a golden argosy bearing you into your first Ægean sunrise. Around the horizon, hinted in faint grey, lies the well-known map of the Mediterranean translated into reality. On the left a rocky headland,

Cape Matapan, shows the distant mainland of Greece. Nearer, looming grey and large, is Cythera, and on the distant southern horizon the smaller island, Anticythera, that cost the Roman world a shipload of masterpieces and kept them for the delight of our own generation (see p. 188). Behind Cythera the jagged line of Cape Malea, the most eastern promontory of the Peloponnese, can be seen on a clear day. Had our course been set for Athens rather than for Crete we should have headed close under this rock of evil name. Our steamer would have hooted greetings to the tiny hermitage perched where only goats should climb, and the lonely hermit who lives there would have rung his chapel bell in answer.

The boat is heading south-east, and far away on the right—a glow of snowy peaks—the White Mountains stand to receive the first heartleap of recognition. So are the white cliffs of Dover to the Briton, and so was the tip of Athena's brazen spear on the Acropolis to the returning Greek mariner. Beneath the mountains lies Crete, beautiful, enticing, romantic. The island is little more than three successive mountain ranges—the White Mountains, Ida, and Lasithi, with the uplands at their feet rich in corn, wine, and oil. For the greater part of the year these mountains are capped with snow. Their outlines dominate the whole island. The highlands leading up to them are pierced with luxuriant gorges. On the map, Crete seems shaped like a long boat; its high, sharp prow points to the west, its curving stern to the east; the straight keel is its inhospitable southern shore. Such harbours as it has are on the north, but, except for the one splendid natural inlet of Suda Bay, these were better for the light craft of antiquity than for our own deep-drawing steamers.

In rough weather anchorage is uncertain in all Cretan harbours except Suda Bay, and few travellers would

choose to be put ashore at Suda, where there is no town, no inn, and no regular means of communication with the nearest town (Canea).

Canea, Rettimo, and Candia are the three ports along the northern coast. Canea lies most to the west and has a distinctly African flavour, owing to its intercourse with the Cyrenaica. Its name is a corruption of the classical Cydonia, and this again is embedded in modern Greek as the word for quince. If the Greeks knew quinces in the first instance as "Apples of Cydonia," is it not possible that quinces were cultivated in prehistoric times and carried by the Minoans from Crete to Greece? The old sea routes are little changed, and still as in Roman days there is a geographical connection between Crete and the province of Cyrenaica. As Sicily is the natural stepping-stone between Tunisia and Italy, so Crete is the step between Greece and the Cyrenaic promontory. There is no direct steamer route along the coast of North Africa. An Arab from Benghazi, in charge perhaps of a consignment of butter for Alexandria, must leave his Italian boat at Canea and wait there for the *Pan-Hellene* that will carry him to Egypt. Captain Spratt, who made the Admiralty chart for Crete, and wrote two amusing volumes describing his travels on Cretan muletracks, mentions that in the middle of last century he found a tribe of Benghazi Arabs settled in tents outside the town wall.

To Canea also have drifted the African elements from other parts of Crete. The Egyptian soldiers of Mehemet Ali are said to have settled here at the close of the first Greco-Turkish war, and here are the remains of a black serf population, mentioned in Venetian archives, and connected by tradition with the Saracen invaders of the eighth and ninth centuries. Even from the sea the town has an African look. Six flower-like minarets rise from the undergrowth of domes and flat-roofed white houses.

Two palm-trees on the quay seem set there to say, "Africa."

But Venice has her mark here too. Around the town runs the encircling Venetian wall, its arms stretching partially across the harbour mouth, and its sloping ramp stamped here and there and here again with the Lion of St. Mark. Unless you are a blasé traveller from the East, accustomed to the glow of dark faces and bright colours, I envy you the first morning in Canea. Boatmen in baggy breeches and bare legs; black-bearded countrymen in high boots carrying themselves magnificently; dandies with tightly gartered stockings of flamingo or canary colour; full-blooded Ethiopians in sacks; Arabs in flowing white from the Cyrenaica; hundreds of cheerful brown boys with very little in the way of clothes and a great deal in the way of smile, all these you will see; but the Russian, French, and Italian soldiers who used to mix with them have vanished together with their three flags that floated over the town. The Turkish flag flies no longer on that rock in the harbour of Suda Bay, the last place in Crete where it was shown.

Steamers generally wait a day in Canea to take on a cargo of oil or wine, or to unload hardware, petroleum, and other luxuries of civilization. I once remember seeing several hundred tons of gunpowder put ashore from our steamer. There is not much sight-seeing to be done, but one can be very happy sitting in the public gardens, exploring the immense dark vaults of the old Venetian galley-houses, visiting the Turkish Cemetery, the local schools of weaving and embroidery, or driving out to the Governor's residence, a pleasant white villa, fronted with an avenue of giant marguerites and a meditative sentinel. Then when evening comes, if you are wise, you will not return to your boat for dinner. You will go to the little inn on the edge of the quay and

order your meal on the unstable wooden balcony that juts over the water. As dusk falls, the lights from the black hull of your steamer throw spirals of gold into the smooth harbour ; each fishing boat shines like a glow-worm with its single light ; strange great moths of mauve and white and brown come round your little lamp. You lean your arms on the balcony and hear the waves against the wall. " It's as good as Venice," you say to yourself, " only—so much better."

There are plenty of boats, Austrian, Italian, or coasting Greek steamers, to carry you on from Canea to Candia. A short intermediate stop will be made at Retimo, a town of local importance only. It lies higher than Canea and Candia, and looks more of a fortress as it rises from the sea—steep rocks crowned with the sloping Venetian ramp. It is the port of a large agricultural district, the capital of one of the four nomarchies of Crete.

Cretan geography is delightfully simple. The island is so narrow that it is divided into four quarters, the divisions running north and south from sea to sea, each comprising a block of mountain and a northern port. First comes Canea and the White Mountains. Next Retimo with Mount Ida. Third Candia and Lasithi (but Mount Ida cannot help overlooking the Candia district as well as her own territory), and fourthly Hagios Nikolaos with the Sitia mountains and the port of Sitia (both mountains and port of less importance than those in the first three nomarchies). These divisions go back certainly to Venetian times, and probably earlier. Each capital is near a Roman site. Canea as we saw, answered to Cydonia ; Retimo is the classical Rethymnos ; Candia was the port for Knossos, and Hagios Nikolaos is on the site of Lato, one of the many small states of Eastern Crete.

Candia approached from the sea seems a more compact edition of Canea, without its African element. Here the

Venetian walls hug the town more closely and enclose a smaller pool or harbour. It used to be the capital of the island, but since Canea was chosen as the seat of Government, Candia has a certain lofty provincialism that does not make it less attractive. There are fewer minarets against the sky-line ; there is less bustle on the quay than at Canea, yet on the whole its situation is more impressive. The Venetian fortification goes sheer down into the water—a magnificent front for the breakers. The town lies tilted with a slope towards the sea, that goes far to justify the perspective of those mediaeval artists whose pictures show every building in the town. Indeed, this sloping view of the city with the wall enclosing it, and the sea washing its rampart, always makes the approach to Candia seem like stepping into the inset of a sixteenth-century map.

II

IN THE CANDIA MUSEUM

But mediaeval Candia must wait until the prehistoric treasures have been seen—treasures that have made the island famous, revealing it as the threshold of Greek history, nay more, as a complete cycle of history in itself. The collection is housed in a great white building standing to the east of the town, a conspicuous landmark as one approaches from the sea.

Here is shown practically everything of interest that has been found in the island, making a series so complete that no other European museum (except perhaps Copenhagen) can rival it as a collection of national antiquities. It is true that Admiral Spratt collected a good many marbles of the classical period which are now in the British Museum or at Cambridge, but the vein of prehistoric antiquities had not been struck in his

day, and it is the series of Bronze Age finds that is the glory of this treasure-house.

For some time it had been suspected that Crete had played a great part in the Mycenæan age, but it was not until 1895 that Milchlöfer's guess was verified. In this year Sir Arthur Evans explored Cretan villages, collected the "milk-stones" worn as charms by the peasant-women, and after studying the signs engraved upon them, came to the conclusion that there must have been a system of prehistoric writing in the island. While Crete was under Turkish rule it was hopeless to think of excavating, but he bought the hill of Kephala (Knossos) and staked out a claim against the day when it might be possible to excavate. The emancipation of Crete came earlier even than he had expected. In 1898 the island was occupied by the troops of the Allied Powers, and early in 1900 he and Mr. Hogarth began to dig in and around the Palace of Knossos. Almost at the same time Professor Halbherr lit upon a palace of the same period at Phaistos, less than thirty miles to the south-west. Other workers flocked to Crete, and from each excavation came new treasures for the collection. In ten years the nucleus formed in Turkish days by a patriotic group of local antiquaries had grown to a museum of world-wide fame.

In those early days the moving spirit in that little society was a young doctor, Joseph Hazzidakis. To-day he is Director-General of Antiquities throughout the island and Keeper of the Candia Museum. He sits at the centre of the web, keeping touch with all that goes on in the different fields of excavation, assimilating new knowledge and arranging new material, befriending the European students who come to study in the museum, and directing the excavations that the museum yearly makes on its own account. He has the dignity characteristic of the older generation of Cretans. Like others who

have lived through the stormy times vaguely referred to as "the troubles," he has gained a quiet and cheerful self-reliance. Before the enrolment of the Cretan militia, the old Turkish barracks were used as the museum. The ancient Greek inscriptions were stored away in the disused rifle racks where somehow they seemed more at home than in the lofty halls which have now been built for them by some Greek architect dreaming of classical temples.

Outside the museum door a row of Greco-Roman statues stand in exile. Once they were the pride of the collection: now they are turned into the cold to make room for the new wonders. Without even pausing to look at these, one mounts the staircase to the main hall where the prehistoric finds are skilfully arranged.

There is something dramatic in the way in which the bronze "double-axe" set on a high pedestal dominates the hall. All the most striking objects are thus placed on isolated stands and the eye is helped in every way. Much time and thought have gone to making correct restorations. Instead of broken fragments lying in trays the clay vases have been put together; the glorious stone basins, jars, and stands are restored to their original splendour. The frescoes are made intelligible by sketchy outlines filling in the missing pieces. Knowledge gained from one painting is used to help out another. A delicate ivory carving of a diving boy is placed in an upright glass case in which he is held poised in just the diver's position. The larger objects, great bronze cauldrons, painted sarcophaghi, and decorated jars are given less conspicuous places. The finer painted ware, the porcelain plaques and figurines, the seals, ornaments, gems, and all small objects needing close scrutiny, are set out in the best light in the central glass cases.

The arrangement is not chronological but topographical. The finds from Knossos are grouped nearest the

entrance and continue half-way down the hall. Objects from the neighbourhood of Phaistos are to the right, and so forth. It is useless to describe the position in detail, for the number of new finds each year necessitates constant re-arrangement. For the same reason no satisfactory catalogue can be published, and it is well to take some modern book to read on the spot. For English readers Burrows' "Discoveries in Crete" and Hawes' "Crete the Forerunner" are useful. Here I only mention a few of the most conspicuous objects.

From Knossos comes the large gaming-board that catches one's eye on first entering, noticeable for its light blue and crystal inlay, combined with silver and gold and ivory. The design of the board is as elaborate as the ornament, pointing to an age like our own, when the art of amusement had become a complicated study. Yet this table belongs to a day that was old when Homer sang.

Here is a set of small faïence plaques showing dwelling houses two and three stories high, some with gable roofs and black timber wall-beams not unlike the "black and white" houses of Western Britain. Wood must have been plentiful when these houses were built, for timber is freely used. The round ends of the tree boles make decorative lines in the outer surface of the wall.

Case after case is filled with pottery as graceful in outline as the vases of later Greece. Most of them are decorated with rich glaze ornament in red or brown. The designer of to-day is beginning to find here a wealth of new suggestions. There are conventional patterns of scroll and spiral: sketches of growing flowers, a crocus or an iris, indicated by swift strokes of a brush handled with a deftness of touch almost Japanese; shell and seaweed and the eight-armed polypus show possibilities of twirl and whorl that our own age has passed by. The colouring is for the most part bright and

effective. Here and there, time or chance, or some deeper artistic understanding has attained a masterpiece of mellow harmonies. Look, for instance, at some of the Zakro bowls and jugs where the colours blend from orange to rose, or at this frescoed olive in the glass case beside the door. It is only a small fragment with the design of an olive branch on a square foot of plaster. Each leaf is laid on in one light, detached stroke, and the colours are a harmony of cream, pale turquoise, and bronze. If art is "crystallized delight," here is a real work of art telling of the maker's joy in this sombre spray.

But it is not only their work, it is the people themselves who are here. Draw aside the holland screens that cover the frescoes on the entrance wall, and there are the men and women of three or four thousand years ago, in colours almost as gay as when they were first painted, and drawn with a surprising swing and sharpness of characterization.

The men are tall, nude, bronzed. They carry themselves like kings. Their long hair curls over bare shoulders and touches a tight metal waist-belt. Their faces are beardless and aglow with vigour. The women (drawn, it must be admitted, by an inferior artist) look *petite* and effeminate, with large black eyes and mocking red lips. Here, as in all ancient art, the flesh of the men is red, the women white, and the convention corresponds to a difference of life and habit; these men were hardy, open-air fellows, and the women delicate stay-at-homes. Even the "king" wears nothing in addition to his feather crown but a loin-cloth and belt, whereas all the women are over-dressed, over-decorated, over-curled, and, I am sure, over-scented. The women's quarters in the Palace at Knossos tell the same story. They are carefully planned, beautifully painted, and elaborately secluded. The pleasant eastern terrace, where the queen and her



FIGURE OF SNAKE-CHARMER FOUND AT KNOSSOS

ladies could walk, is screened from observation from the other parts of the palace.

And yet, looking at the sprightly profiles on these frescoes, one realizes that the seclusion was not due to jealous Orientalism, but rather to a form of Minoan chivalry that sheltered a fine bloom of its civilization. These Minoan ladies are well educated. They have heard talk of men and affairs, and their delicate little noses have grown a slight upward tilt to mark their conscious superiority. The fresco with the massed tiers of women's faces shows that they were allowed to visit public amusements—bull-fights perhaps. They often laughed. And they often, Ariadne-like, took the law into their own hands and interfered successfully in affairs of state. There is something awe-inspiring in the wonderful porcelain figures, in big busby hats and furbelow petticoats, who brandish snakes and stare with fierce black eyes. Here is femininism run riot. Are they votaries of some ancient mother-goddess, or of the goddess Fashion only? (Plate 1.)

The frescoes of the lily-white ladies suggest questions of life inside the palace. But what of the larger world outside? What was the fabric of Empire on which rested all this finished social life? This ruddy cup-bearer, he knows the answer. He stands here alert and smiling, his dark hair curling to his waist, his body slightly thrown back to balance the weight of the large golden cup that he carries: on his wrist the seal worn as a bracelet shows that he is some palace official. He tells the story of some great thalassocracy—a sea-empire. That is why the Minoan settlements lie unfortified: that is why their men are sunburned and virile, their women splendidly dressed, and their homes magnificent luxurious, secure: that is why their decoration loves the sea-creatures—the flying-fish, the octopus, the coral, the trumpet shell.

Early in Neolithic times, whilst the rest of Europe was still in a state of barbarism, there lived round the shores of the Eastern Mediterranean a race of men—small, swarthy, and long-headed—who already showed themselves artists, traders, and explorers. While Assyria, Babylonia, and Egypt were each in turn rulers of the world, Crete had its empire also, not like these others, an empire of vast land territory, but a thalassocracy ruling the sea and the sea coasts, suppressing piracy and carrying on its trade with places as far apart as Ethiopia and Central Europe, as Assyria and Sicily. An island-empire, dependent solely on its power at sea, drawing its wealth from its native industry as well as from commerce—the historic parallel that at once suggests itself is that of England under Queen Elizabeth. One might fancy that the temper of the people was also somewhat similar—active, breezy, adventurous ; fond of sport, fond of dress, fond of dancing and amusement.

The capital of this Cretan empire lay on the northern coast at Knossos, three miles from Candia. Other towns fringed the shores of the island, and settlements were made on the mainland of Greece and on the islands of the *Ægean*. The name of Minos is as proverbial in these waters as was afterwards the name of Solomon further east. He seems in the end to become the embodiment of all this far-reaching Cretan civilization ; and it is not unlikely that Minos became a kind of general title such as Pharaoh. An adjective has been coined from it and archæologists divide the time of Cretan rule into Early, Middle, and Late Minoan periods.

Outside the capital of Knossos the island must have borne a rich population. Fisherfolk fringed the shores ; smaller trading centres grew up in the few sheltered bays ; inland a population of farmers lived in solidly-built homesteads cultivating corn and oil. In the later days of the Minoan Empire the wealthy ruling classes

had homes in the country and lived in beautiful villas such as those unearthed at Hagia Triada, on the south side of the island. Near it another palace has been excavated by the Italians (at Phaistos), which shows that here also was a great Minoan centre. Homer speaks of "hundred-cited Crete," and the extent of its trade tells the same story. The settlements of this age are unfortified. Those were the old spacious days when expansion of trade did not inevitably imply collision with the interests of other nations.

From fishermen the Cretans became traders and soon monopolized the carrying-trade of the Ægean. By its position their island was well suited for this rôle. The high civilization of Egypt and Assyria met in Crete the instinctive artistic excellence of the Mediterranean peoples, mingled perhaps with some northern element that gave stability to the race. At all events the result was the production of a new civilization much tinged with Egyptian influence, but showing itself both in religion and in art simpler and more human than anything that came from Egypt. At Knossos one generation of artists succeeded another. Their painted ware and goldsmiths' work were prized throughout the Eastern Mediterranean. Their ships carried objects of art to other countries and brought home metals from the North, ivory and spices from the East. The character of their rule must at one time have been something like that of our East India Company—peaceful on the whole, fighting when necessary, not for territory but for trade. As the carriers of the Mediterranean they seem to have held the same position as that taken by the Phœnicians in later days.

No doubt Crete was to Egypt the land of romance, the *Ultima Thule* of their world. It and the other Ægean lands are spoken of on the Egyptian inscriptions by vague suggestives names: "the Ends of the Lands of the

Great Circle," the "Isles in the midst of the Very Green Sea." The long-haired, naked Cretans, with their beautiful wares, hailing from this distant land, struck the historian's fancy as something picturesque and unusual in Egypt, the land of flowing robes and stately head-gear. On the tomb of Rek-ma-ra, vizier to a Thothmes of the Eighteenth Dynasty, there is painted a procession of Keftians bringing gifts. They are naked, long-haired, slender ; blood-brothers to the cupbearer from Knossos.

For some 2,500 years Crete was supreme in the Ægean. Naturally in so long a space of time there were interruptions and disastrous incidents. Many of these have left their mark in the blackened walls and charred remains found at different successive levels in the palace of Minos ; on the whole, however, it seems that revolutions from within are more often responsible for these catastrophes than invasion from without. The invasions such as there were left no permanent scar since neither language nor religion were essentially altered. Ultimately a change came over the Ægean world and the centre of gravity passed from Crete to the mainland. About the middle of the fifteenth century B.C. Knossos was destroyed and sacked, and though reinhabited, never regained her former importance. Of the empire's long death struggle we know nothing, and for the catastrophe itself there is only the evidence of the blackened stones, and the sacked palace from which all the precious metals were looted.

The story of Theseus embodies the memory of this civilization. It shows that the Greeks remembered a power alien, terrible, and splendid ; that they remembered a time when the ruler of Crete was in a position to exact the most mortifying tribute from Greece—a blood-tax of slaves from the youth of the nation. The excavations at Knossos have made it possible to illustrate this old legend from actual remains. We picture the

long, open boat beached on the little bay beside the port of Candia, the convoy of youths and maidens from Athens, with Theseus, the king's son, among them, and the five miles of dusty open country across which they were driven to the great palace of King Minos at Knossos. This palace is made real to us by the actual remains excavated by Sir Arthur Evans, which still stand in some places as much as three stories high. For the most part it is made of a white gypsum, whose tiny crystals dance and twinkle in the sun. A palace of diamonds it must have been when Theseus saw it. It is fronted by a paved open space, finished with tiers of low steps. The steps do not lead into the palace, and seem more probably to have been placed there as seats for spectators. The open space in front would therefore serve as a kind of primitive theatre or dancing ground. Inside is the huge central court, surrounded by offices of state, the grand staircase and the throne-room in which there stands the chair of state on which King Minos sat, with stone benches for his counsellors round the wall. Beyond the throne-room is an elaborate series of offices and passages which are quite complicated enough to have served for the basis of the legend that this palace was a great labyrinth in which King Minos kept his monster the Minotaur ; and behind these again is the wide corridor backed by an imposing array of storehouses filled with jars of baked clay, each large enough to hide one of Ali Baba's thieves. Underground vaults there are too, and in these the prisoners would be housed until they were brought out to make sport for the royal household by an unequal contest with the bulls of King Minos. Various frescoes and reliefs found on the palace walls, which show that bull-baiting was a favourite sport at Knossos, may still be seen in the museum at Candia.

In one relief the head of a bull is splendidly executed

in red plaster. A fresco shows a bull charging a girl athlete (Plate 2). A boy is turning a somersault on the animal's back, and another girl stands behind in an attitude indicating that her performance is safely over. These are no doubt professional toreadors who could take part in the sport with a fair chance of success if the bull were in any way trained for his part. The legend of the man-destroying Minotaur suggests a more barbarous pastime, when captives were led out to fight against a bull so fierce that their death was a certainty. It is for this that Theseus and his friends were stowed away in the innermost recesses of the palace.

Then in the dear old story the heart of the Princess Ariadne is stirred with pity. Has she seen the file of fair-haired Greeks marched into the palace? and has it been a case of love at first sight as her eyes singled out the prince among his comrades? or has a rumour of his voluntary sacrifice touched her? At nightfall she leaves her painted bedroom in the women's quarters under the eastern slope of the hill. She steals up the wide staircase and halts a moment before crossing the moonlit space of the great court. In her hand there gleams one of those famous Minoan swords with beautiful inlay along the blade and a design in low relief on the golden hilt. She finds her way to the prisoners' quarters, helps Theseus to kill the Minotaur, and then fearing the wrath of King Minos flies with Theseus and his companions to the sea, and together they embark for Greece. The story of Theseus's subsequent wanderings does not concern us here. It is hard to forgive the hero for leaving Ariadne desolate on Delos, still harder to forgive him for neglecting to hoist the white sail that was to betoken his success, and so save his father, old Ægeus, from that despairing leap of suicide as he saw the black sail coming up the gulf.

Naturally the legend is rounded off and polished as all



WALL-PAINTING FROM KNOSSOS: BULL AND AEROBATS
FROM A WATER-COLOUR BY E. GILLIÉRON

legends must be that have been tossed to and fro in the sea of tradition some three or four thousand years. It is only as a legend that it can be accepted. Still it is something that recent excavations have shown that what need not be true historically may still be true pictorially ; the great empire of Minos, his terrible bulls, his bewildering palace, and the tribute of young Greeks, all these give an impression quite in harmony with the civilization of the Minoan Empire revealed at Knossos. The numerous colour reliefs that show the very appearance of these old inhabitants of Crete have displaced rather crudely the vague dignified figures of our imagination. Instead of a grim, shadowy Minos, the gloomy judge of the underworld, the only king of Crete that we know is the youthful stalwart king in the fresco, with an elaborate head-dress surmounted by peacock's feathers, a crown of almost barbaric magnificence. What robes of state he wore we cannot tell. The male figures in Minoan art are nude except for a loin-cloth, metal girdle, and high boots. They wear long hair hanging down their backs. And Ariadne ? How are we to picture her ? Not in flowing Grecian draperies, but in elaborate Minoan costume, a costume that can be described only in the terms of the modern modiste. A tight-fitting jacket-bodice cut low in front to show the breasts, a very small waist, an elaborately gathered "bell-skirt," covered either with embroideries or with rows of flounces, a high brimless black hat that is something between the hat of a Greek priest and a soldier's busby ; this is the figure of the Minoan lady that has become familiar on gems and rings and in the little porcelain figures found in an underground shrine at Knossos. Or if the steeple-hat befits only the priestess or the witch, Ariadne may wear instead a disc of straw with roses under the brim, like those of the terra-cotta ladies from Palaikastro.

III

THE VENETIANS IN CANDIA

There are many places to love, but few to be in love with. The little port of Candia is one of those few that can kindle this passionate affection. Small and full of colour as a jewel, it holds in little compass an intensity of life. It seems less a harbour than a haven—not a busy centre of wholesale trade, but a refuge for all small craft running before the northern gales. Its entrance is a “needle’s eye” for shipping, and none but the humble can pass its seaward gate. Steamers must wait outside, and the long-striding breakers of the “Very Green Sea” tumble mercilessly the heavy shore boats in which passengers land. But once inside the sloping batter of the Venetian walls there is a blue pool of peace, girdled with the swinging curves of the fishing craft and fringed with their intricate cordage. The Venetian ramparts rise out of the still water. A disused fort punctuates the end of the wall at the narrow harbour mouth. Useless as a fortification, it is invaluable as an ornament, for its light stonework catches the colours of dawn and evening and sends them down into the trembling waters of the harbour among the rainbow tints of the craft. Large boats cannot enter this cosy anchorage, so the *caiques* have it all to themselves. Goods for the more important towns are carried by regular steamers. The sailing boats supply the needs of the hundred smaller islands. I have seen one *caïque* carrying a piano, and another laden with rush-bottomed chairs. It takes many chairs to make a cargo, and after the hold of the ship was filled they piled themselves on the poop and even began to climb the rigging, where they were lashed with cords. No effort was made to protect

them from the water, and I wondered in what plight they would reach their journey's end. A cargo of unglazed earthenware jars seemed to have even less chance of a happy arrival, since they also were travelling as deck passengers.

There is still an Italian element in this old Venetian port. A couple of boats from Bari, larger and better manned than the Cretan *caïques*, have their home here, and almost monopolize the fishing, for the Candiots are by nature sailors rather than fishermen. These Bari boats may be seen any fine afternoon swinging round the harbour mouth. Even before the anchors are let down a dozen brown boys scamper up the rigging, and sit like monkeys on the lateen sails which they furl with hands and feet.

Then there is the slim grey schooner which comes periodically from Sicily, bringing the precious sulphur for the vines, and gradually filling the harbour with her pale primrose dust. As soon as she is moored, planks are placed from her bulwarks to the shore, and over these a succession of half-naked brown figures run nimbly up and down. They wear sacks over their heads, and on these sacks they carry the bags of sulphur, which they pitch on to the backs of waiting donkeys. The process of unloading lasts a week or more, and by the time it is over the men are yellow, the donkeys are yellow, and the street from the harbour to the town is powdered with soft yellow dust. It is a fair sight, even at noonday, but wait till evening adds her own primrose light to the harmony and then see what magic that Sicilian sulphur ship has brought.

Various captains saunter round the harbour, as beautiful as their boats and as miscellaneous as their cargoes. What cut-throats they look! Yet most of them are really decent, hard-working fellows. This tawny giant, who wears a shirt of red flannel printed with large white lozenges, is the brother of our own housemaid. She

speaks of him proudly as a "reformed pirate," and though I question both the reform and the piracy, I have no doubt that his innocent-looking blue and green *Ariadne* has seen some odd cargoes on her decks. I myself have seen a couple of hundred rifles carried on board at dusk. This is the romance of the retail traffic of the sea. Think of the adventures awaiting each man who owns a boat—the luck of the seas, the sudden squalls, the tempestuous venture, the safe return or the unknown end. Think of the little white towns hovering over their own watery reflections as they wait for these small consignments of civilization borne to them on the pointed golden wings of the *caïque*.

The spirit of the port has changed little since Venetian days. Then, as now, it was the scene of a hundred little activities. The Cretan galleys of the fifteenth century were merchantmen belonging to private owners. They exported the hot Cretan wine, honey, wax, cheese, cotton, and carved chests; and brought back glass, tapestry, brocade, spices, and perfumes from the East. These were not all for home consumption. They were often for further distribution, for Crete was an *entrepôt* of Mediterranean traffic.

In those days Crete was obliged to furnish Venice with two armed galleys for six months' service in the Adriatic. These were boats of private adventurers chartered and armed with boatmen at the expense of the Cretan Government. The Venetian archives are full of documents relating to these boats and to the commerce of Crete. They give a vivid picture of the Cretan captain waiting till the sea is clear of Genoese ships, darting up the Adriatic, offering tenders to the Venetian Senate, receiving the cargo which is to be carried perhaps as far as Syria, and then leaving the lagoons with a certain fixed itinerary to which he must absolutely adhere. There was to be no turning aside to snap up a chance cargo, or some

Venetian ship-owner might suffer. Venice was jealous of the privileges of her own ships, and the preference given to them was often the subject of formal complaint. She taxed the Cretan merchants heavily, and crippled enterprise by her grudging legislation. No Cretan ship could leave the harbour of Venice without consent of the Senate. At one time Crete was forbidden to grow its own corn lest it should become too independent; at another the export of cypress wood was forbidden, lest the supply for ship-building should be exhausted. This last piece of legislation was made in the true interest of the island, but it was none the less galling to the merchants who suffered by it.

In 1204 at the partition of the Eastern Empire (p. 217) Crete fell to the share of the Marquis of Montserrat, who sold it to the Venetians for one thousand marks of silver. The price does not seem excessive, though he parted with a sovereignty that was purely nominal. Venice having paid for Crete in hard cash treated the island as a mere business speculation. She taxed it as much as it could bear, and in return she protected the harbours and gave the country a government strictly impartial in its harshness. To the Cretans she appeared a rapacious mistress. It was not till her protection was withdrawn that they found how much they had owed to her.

In appearance Venice still rules the harbour. The Lion of St. Mark frowns a battered frown on the barefooted urchins who chase each other round the string-course of the old fort. On entering the custom-house any traveller who, at that exciting moment has eyes for the past, will readily see that the modern *douane* is built against the end of one of the Venetian galley-houses. The dark recesses of the interior, now used for storing bales, are covered by mediaeval vaults. The galley-houses are mostly in ruins, but one other still keeps its roof whole, and is conspicuous among the smaller buildings of the

harbour. In Venetian days there were more than a dozen such here. They stood like gigantic stables down by the waterside, much as the ship-sheds for the Athenian triremes bordered the harbour of the Piræus. Under these high-spanned vaults the Cretan galleys were built and repaired. The size of the building gives the scale of the boats they housed; the high, upcurving hulls with their fin-like sweep of oars, the heavy, square-rigged masts, and the towers for archers in the prow. In the fifteenth century Candia had some fame as a ship-building centre, and Venice ordered boats of the prized cypress wood to be built here for her own use.

The Venetian town of Candia is now deeply embedded in the later Turkish houses, but here and there a corner of Venice comes to the surface. If once one begins to look out for her it is astonishing how often the West smiles out through the Eastern veil. The mosques cover churches. Turkish houses are set on Venetian foundations. A narrow Turkish street may hold a cloister wall, or a text from the Koran adorn an Italian fountain. One notable instance of Venetian work is the doorway, with a design of grapes and *acanthus*, hidden in a narrow street below the Eastern Telegraph office. Arches and plinths that must have belonged to the same Italian building can be traced far down the side lanes. The luxury of telegraphing to England costs twopence-halfpenny a word, but considering this exquisite stonework at its entrance, and the panorama of sea and harbour from its windows, the telegraph office might safely double its rate without losing our custom.

Across the middle of the present town there runs a solid line of masonry sometimes known as the old Genoese wall. The name is picturesque, but since the Genoese were only masters of Candia for five years it is not likely that they did more than set hand to the building. It probably represents the wall of the first

small Venetian settlement. It can be traced from the plateau in front of the old St. George's Gate, now known as the "Square of the Three Arches" (Tris Kamarais Square), to the open market-place in the centre of the town. Here it is interrupted for a space, then it continues again in the line of police barracks, after which it vanishes. The wall is made of a coarse yellow tufa, not beautiful, but solid and venerable. There are traces of towers set in the wall about 90 feet apart. Small houses have grown about its ruined top, gay and irregular as the yellow marigolds that have also come there uninvited. The bit of the wall that runs from the Tris Kamarais Square is broken by many small doors. Push open one of these, scramble over a heap of masonry or up a flight of garden steps and you will find yourself in the yard of a little house which is set on the top of the old wall.

Like many another precious bit of old Candia the Genoese wall is fast disappearing. Between one visit and another we found a piece of it pulled down to make way for a modern house, whose owner preferred to use the old stones for a new building instead of perching airily on the top of the wall in the good old style.

When the Venetian settlement outgrew the narrow space enclosed by the sea and this first line of wall, a number of houses settled outside the town and then the fortification of this larger burgh had to be considered. The old wall was found "not only useless but also inconvenient and a hindrance," and in 1541 the Italian engineer, Michele Sammichele, proposed destroying it altogether "since the material would be useful for finishing the new fortifications." The dwellers within the older town resented this attack on their privileges, and a compromise was arrived at. The old wall was left standing, but one large breach was made for the main stream of traffic as well as a few smaller

openings at stated intervals along the wall. The "great breach" which was perhaps on the site of the old gateway was now "embellished with a fine arch" and the open space behind it became the main square of the town. In this square was placed the beautiful fountain which is still the chief feature of Candia; it has eight bays carved with tritons, dolphins, and sea nymphs. Four lions set back to back with water running from their mouths supplied the large basin. There is little water in the fountain now and the lions' mouths are grievously dry.

The relation of the old wall to the newer outer wall is an amusing little bit of history; the line of demarcation is always so jealously guarded by those dwelling within the pale, so scoffed at by those outside. Gerola in his fascinating volumes on the Venetian architecture of Crete has gathered together many documents bearing on this period. There were endless negotiations between the Cretan Government and the Venetian Senate as to the repair of the old wall and the building of the new. In 1465 the Cretan Government reports that it is "absolutely impossible to continue the building of the walls and towers" with the system then in vogue. The Senate replies by advising a new method of raising money: the expenses for the new fortifications are to be apportioned as follows, "one half from the nobles, feudatories, and citizens, and the other half from the Cretan Government and the Jews." Before long comes an appeal from Candia for more money and also for iron tools which are "difficult to procure in the island," and a notification that the gate in the old wall is "so weak that it could not be weaker." To judge from the depressing tone of these documents one would imagine that the work was almost at a standstill, yet in 1491 a German pilgrim, Dietrich von Schachten, writes that the Venetians have a "beautiful big town

ditch" and are making strong buildings upon it. Throughout the whole of the next century the people of Candia were busy with their fortifications. In fact the work never came to an end so long as the Venetians occupied the town. Now it is the sea that has ruined a bit of the mole and now the introduction of cannon has revolutionized the science of fortification and a new series of earthworks and redoubts have become necessary. From one cause or another completion was delayed. But still these great city walls are the proudest relic of the Venetian occupation. They will last while Candia lasts. There is something Roman in their magnificent permanence; they remain an enduring protest against everything shoddy and mean. Where Venice came she meant to stay and when she built she built for futurity. St. Mark's Lion set on gate and bastion seems to proclaim the pleasure of an artist signing a work that he knows to be good.

While this work was going on outside, the interior of the town was also being enriched with good public buildings. Around the fountain square the old plans of Candia show the palace of the Duke, and the palace of the Grand Captain (the Duke being Governor of the whole island and the Grand Captain responsible only for the military welfare of the department of Candia). There was also the great Church of San Marco and other municipal buildings, including an armoury. All of these have disappeared except the church (which, as usual, has been turned into a mosque) and the armoury, which has had a varied history and which may still be seen a hundred paces further down the main street. It has been badly treated, but two beautiful arcades still remain. In order to mark the withdrawal of the Turkish troops in 1898 a large public library was planned, which should incorporate the façade of this Venetian armoury. The work had already been begun when it was found that

the old walls would not bear the strain of the new building. The plan was abandoned and the armoury to-day stands uncertain of its fate. Its front is covered with whitewash, its lower arcade blocked with modern masonry; but there is something fine in the sweep of its walls with their unmistakable Venetian batter and string-course, and even in ruin the arcades are good to look at. Behind them rises a lily-like minaret, showing its little red flag for the hour of prayer by day and a lamp for the evening prayer.

The town is rich in Italian churches now used as mosques. The most beautiful of these is the Venetian Church of Santa Catarina, which stands near the gate of Gesù. You pass through this gate on the way out to Knossos. The church is a large basilica-like building, and one wonders if even in Venetian days a congregation could have been found to fill it, yet it was by no means their largest church. The Moslems have now boarded off one half of the interior to serve as an *apothéke* for mosque furniture—a queer collection of old benches and lamps and banners. The partition wall and the other woodwork of the mosque at the end of the building are painted in soft, faded tones of emerald and turquoise. The floor is carpeted with pale yellow matting and above there are rows of tiny lights set low. A raised *daïs* leads up to the Moslem Holy of Holies, which has been placed cornerwise across the east end of the church that it may point to Mecca and not to Jerusalem. Beside it the invariable mosque clock with Turkish dial swings an enormous pendulum, and all around shine the intricacies of blue and purple tilework. It is these Persian tiles that are the glory of the present building, and have earned fame for it as the Blue Mosque of Candia. Evening service in this mosque is an unforgettable experience. All is in gloom except the east end where cool tiles mirror the few tiny lights. Here, while their leader reads from the

Koran, half a dozen stately old Moslems stand, or bend, or prostrate themselves. There are silent pauses while the long figures stoop and kiss the ground. No music and no word from the congregation, only the one droning voice and the intervals of silence.

At the foot of the old square, outside the Blue Mosque, are fragments of a marble screen and headless Christian saints, who were probably turned out to make way for the Persian tiles. They were once adapted to the uses of a fountain, but its basin is now dry and the saints guard only the lettuces and artichokes of a little vegetable stall that has come to live beside them.

The mosque on the site of that which was once the Church of San Marco is worth visiting for the sake of the odd column bases in the interior. They are shaped like inverted Corinthian capitals. On the steps of this mosque a number of old Turkish ladies sit cross-legged beside piles of home-woven goods: carpets, aprons, and gay stockings, which they offer for sale. They are very friendly and very merry, and they seem to enjoy themselves in their shady corner where they can gossip and watch the life of the square.

Another old church which apparently was too much ruined by the siege to serve as a mosque is the Church of San Rocco, which stands down by the port. It seems to have been round in plan with a cloister outside. The cloister now serves for a mason's yard, and is full of Turkish tombstones. The church itself is a mere store-house. A church of San Rocco always betokens Venetian occupation. A native of Montpelier, San Rocco (Saint Roch) lived in the fourteenth century. He travelled throughout Italy and showed wonderful powers of nursing and healing the plague-stricken. After death his remains, treasured at Montpelier, continued to work miracles in cases of epidemic. Venetians, with their numerous possessions in the Levant, were particularly likely to suffer

from the plague, and in the fifteenth century a party of pious Venetians, visiting Montpelier as pilgrims, managed to steal the saint's body. This was brought to Venice with great rejoicing. A church and hospital was founded for the saint, and Tintoretto's glowing frescoes are still to be seen on the walls of the Scuola di San Rocco in Venice. Whether the stolen relics continue to work miracles in their new surroundings we are not told. At all events, here in Candia his church is set with intention close down by the harbour. Plague always comes first to a port, and before reaching the town that deadly enemy would find itself confronted with a saint who had the reputation of a specialist in such matters.

In 1645 the Turks invested the town and for twenty-four years the city walls stood the test of the longest siege in history. An interesting memorial of this siege is found beside a little open square in the south-west corner of the town. Here is a pretty fountain decorated with four Corinthian capitals and bearing a Latin inscription dated 1666. This tells how the *Providatore Generale* Antonius Piolus obtained a new source of water for the citizens and gave them this fountain after the town had been besieged "four times five years," when the water supply seemed about to fail.

IV

CANDIA OF TO-DAY

The Candia of to-day still looks like a Turkish town, though a few modern "European" buildings are rising. One notes with sadness that new houses imitate those of modern Athens and forsake the pleasant courtyard style so appropriate to a hot climate. A European house has its best face to the street; a Moslem's house turns its back

to the public. A passer-by would hardly guess at the jars of growing flowers, the fountains, fruit trees, and courts of inlaid pebbles that wait behind the closed doors in those blank, high walls.

The heart of the town is still the market-place outside the Turkish gate. Sometimes one hears the square dignified by the name At Meidan, much as if one came across a Trafalgar Square in some small Indian province. To it all the traffic converges, and from it the roads branch off north, south, east, and west. It is good to turn here about eight o'clock in the morning, to find the market smelling of hot loaves, and to watch the world buying its breakfast. Rings of bread on trays, fruit, vegetables, and *mizethra* on the stalls, baskets of fish from the harbour, and basins of white Turkish curd ; here they are appealing to eyes and nostrils, and to ears too, for each salesman cries his wares with its own especial adjective : " Shellfish of the moment," " Beautiful oranges," " Fresh bread," are shouted up and down the street. The *giaourti* seller alone does not need to call for attention. In his yellow shirt and green stockings he walks silently by, balancing on his head a triple tray, and each tray bears a dozen basins of curds. Whatever our nationality we all rush to buy *giaourti*. The trays are emptied almost as soon as he appears.

The world here is more magnificently staged and dressed than in a theatre. There is hardly a black coat to be seen. The Cretans are still proud of their national costume ; their hanging breeches, and waistcoats with converging lines of buttons. They carry themselves magnificently, with a slight swagger that sets the dark blue drapery swinging and displays broad shoulders and slim hips. Round the thin Cretan waist a thick red or purple sash is wound. The countrymen wear top-boots, black or yellow, according to the season ; the townsmen prefer a pair of tight stockings in some

exquisite rainbow shade of apricot, canary, or green. It is no good hoping to possess such stockings yourself. They are no more to be bought to order than the rainbow itself. No shop sells them, but "sometimes you find a man who brings them to the town." This was all the information we could gather, and though visiting Candia at all seasons of the year we never saw that swarthy pedlar with his gaudy wares.

In a bird's-eye view of the town this market-place would look like the centre of a coloured star, brilliant, clamorous, kaleidoscopic. The rays of the star pierce the side lanes, carrying animation down the "street of the bootmakers," "the street of the tailors," "the street of the hammerers," and so forth. And between the rays are silent blocks of houses, their plaster tinted with beautiful faint old shades of mauve and cream and green; upper stories launched out across the street on crumbling grey timber supports; and windows filled with decaying lattice work. The high, blank walls of these Turkish houses give a prisoned feeling to the lanes. There is neither bright sunlight nor sharp shadow, but a reflected half-light everywhere. In spring a pervasive smell of orange blossom tells of the gardens hidden behind the walls. Occasionally, a Moslem woman in a black veil flits along, like a black bundle, from one door to another. The sombre effect of the street is heightened by her featureless humanity. It is remarkable how seldom one sees women in the main streets of Candia. The Christian women seem even more home-keeping than the Moslems who have the protection of the veil. "Walking across the market-place in Candia feels like going into the Union without your brother," so I once heard an English girl describe her impression of the Moslem atmosphere in the town.

Crete is the land of feuds, the true "Isle of Unrest." In the eighth and ninth centuries it was the Saracens and Byzantines who fought here, then the Genoese and Vene-

tians, then the Venetian and Turk. Now it is Turkey and Greece who claim her, "and the end is not yet."

The distinction between Christian and Moslem intrudes itself even before landing. Among the bumping hubbub of boats that flock round the incoming steamer there are always Christian boats for the Christians, and Moslem boats for the Moslem passengers. The Moslem wears a fez or scarlet handkerchief on his head, and twists a red belt round his waist. The Christian prefers the various shades of indigo so freely used on the island and wears a dark sash. The feud is embittered by the fact that here the division is not racial but religious. With a few exceptions the Moslems in Crete are not Turks by birth, but Cretans who embraced Islam at the time of the Turkish conquest. They seem to have belonged to the town population, whose sense of nationality had already been weakened by dependence on the Venetian foreigner. In some cases, perhaps, they had Italian blood in their veins and bore Italian names. Such are still found in the Island: Pasquale, Cornaro—even Dandolo. The countrymen with farms lying unprotected in the lowlands would also wish to gain the protection of the Turk by an outward conformity to his religion. The Moslems, therefore, are found in and around the larger towns. The hill villages are, and always have been, Christian. One can guess how the hardy Cretan hillsman hated his time-serving brother of the plains.

For two centuries these parties have lived side by side, making Crete a sort of political barometer sensitive to record the state of affairs in Europe. The Greek War of Independence was answered by risings of the Christians in 1821 and 1828. The insurrections of 1856-8 and 1869 corresponded to revolutions on the mainland of Europe, especially the long struggle for the liberation of Italy. The Greco-Turkish War opened with the Christian risings of 1896-7.

The signs of that last outbreak are visible on first landing in Candia. The main street leading from the harbour to the square is still in ruins. It was sacked and burned by the Turks as an answer to the rising of 1896. Barrels of petroleum were opened, and flames poured down the sloping street. When I first came here in 1904, the broken walls were as desolate as Pompeii. It is better now, and each year new houses are being built on the old sites. At the foot of this unhappy-looking street there is an open plateau where the Venetian gate lately stood. This gate vanished in 1897, after the "affair of the custom-house," when the British troops who were taking over the Customs from the Turkish authorities were surrounded and killed. The British fleet arrived the next day, and Admiral Noel's wrath is still remembered. He shipped off the whole Turkish garrison, hanged the chief offenders on the town wall, and utterly demolished the gate that had witnessed their treachery. Since that day there has been an exodus of Moslems from the Island ; the well-to-do have settled in Constantinople and other great centres; the artisans seem to have found homes in Asia Minor, where the liquorice trade of Sokhia is in their hands, and on the site of ancient Cyrene where Turkish-speaking Cretans live to-day. Those who still remain in Candia are a friendly, peaceable folk, and perhaps the old jealousies are being forgotten. At our last landing we found a young Turk pulling bow oar in our Christian boat—a sign of better times coming. Now that Cretan deputies are sitting in the Athenian Parliament the fatalistic Moslem population is learning to submit to the inevitable.

V

PHAISTOS AND COUNTRY TRAVEL

Stay in the town of Candia long enough to get by heart its brilliant harmonies ; haunt the museum and dive into its enchanted ocean of history ; visit Knossos and study there the background against which that vivid Minoan civilization moved ; then say good-bye to town life, hire mule or pony, and set out with light pack and lighter heart to enjoy the unsurpassed loveliness of the island in spring. Whether you are interested in archæology or botany, in geology or in mere human nature, you will find enough to content you in the Cretan countryside.

Even if there be time for nothing else, ride across the hills to the great Messara Plain, put up at Gortyna—where you can wash in a Greek sarcophagus, and sleep in a guest-chamber approached by a staircase of ancient Doric capitals—and then ride on next day to Phaistos and Hagia Triada, where Italian scholars have unearthed the homes of the Minoan princes of Southern Crete.

In the situation of Phaistos there is something that suggests the Acropolis of Athens. The Messara, like the Cephissian Plain, is oval-shaped, surrounded on three sides by hills and on the fourth by the sea. In both plains the Acropolis is set at the seaward end on a ridge of rock, its sharp front cutting into the valley like a ship's high prow. Here the resemblance ends, for whereas in Athens the white houses of the town rise surf-like around the foot of the cliff, at Phaistos the Acropolis drops to a calm green expanse of corn-land. The plain of the Cephissus is stony and dry though olive-studded. The Messara Plain is for months of the year knee-deep in flowers, and has

more spreading olive groves from which rise the chimes of sheep-bells and nightingales. In Athens the Acropolis is a fortress : at Phaistos it is a palace. The Athenian buildings rise conspicuous from every point. At Phaistos the ruins lie low on the lower end of the ridge, and we must turn the crest of the hill before we can look down on the great courtyards, cool terraces, and magnificent tiers of steps. These steps are wonderful, wider and shallower than any modern palace dreams of. Oh, to see one of those supple, swarthy Minoan princes come striding down that staircase ! the processions and the dancing and the ritual of waving boughs ! Is there no magic of moonlight that can bring them back to life as we see them on the gold rings and seal stones and vases ?

This one great palace did not content those luxurious princes of Phaistos. The Messara Plain becomes an oven during the summer months, and it seems to have been for the sake of escaping the excessive heat that they built another settlement an hour's ride from Phaistos in a cooler spot. On the southern end of the same rocky ridge, with a wide outlook towards the sea on one side and the snows of Ida on the other, the Italians are now excavating a series of villas of the same period as the palace. This group of country houses is now known as Hagia Triada, after the little Venetian Church of the Holy Trinity which was the only building on the spot when the excavations were begun. It is here that the most interesting finds were made. The site proved rich in small objects which had been scarce at Phaistos. The painted sarcophagus, the carved stone vases bearing figures in relief, the ingots of copper stamped with Minoan characters, and many other remains of astonishing excellence now to be seen in the Candia Museum, were originally found at Hagia Triada.

The well-known fresco of the wild cat stalking a pheasant comes from a set of rooms that may well have

belonged to the princess of the reigning house. Her apartments are set to the north, and from the cool terrace outside there is a view of sea, and snow mountains that sets one thinking of Etna's white slopes against the blue sea and coast of Sicily. The rooms here are small and must have been as exquisite as they were tiny. The little light-well set round with three columns each of a different marble and the diminutive doors and passage suggest the toy-home of a petted little Minoan lady, dainty as Japan and gay as Paris.

These palaces of the southern kingdom throw reflected glory on the rulers of Knossos. If princes who were but underlings lived in such luxury, how great their overlord must have been ! One wonders how close was the connection between north and south. How many times a week, a month, a year, did the messengers from Knossos canter across that wild moorland region and clatter down the rocky gorges of the hill barrier ? That the Minoans had horses is known from a seal impression found at Knossos. It shows a horse—perhaps imported from Africa—being brought to the island in a large open boat.

Travel in Crete needs little preparation. Although it is real travel (not a mere committing of yourself to the charge of railway and hotel officials) it brings small hardship and much delight. Except at the coast towns, Canea, Retimo, Candia, Sitia, there is no regular inn. In a village of any size hospitality is offered by some well-to-do peasant, who is probably pleased at the novelty of the visit and prides himself on making lavish entertainment.

A day's riding in any part of the island will give plunges from one scene to another. At one time you may be on a limestone plateau covered with white boulders and grey scrub. Then you will drop through thickets of myrtle and arbutus to the oleander valley where

a little cataract tumbles and the nightingales sing at high noon. Constantly in sight of the sea, seldom on the level, and never on a carriage road, the rocky paths of Crete probably follow the tracks used for four thousand years. The famous forests of cypresses and cedars have vanished, and the hills which they once covered are barren. The soil collected by their roots has been washed into the river valleys, leaving the upper slopes to the rocks and rock plants. The flowers belong to three continents, Europe, Africa, and Asia. Even for one who eyes them only as illuminations beside the text of travel they are sufficiently gorgeous.

The cities of Crete are made to delight a mediaeval mind. They are surrounded by magnificent walls filled with buildings of Venetian and Turkish architecture with hardly a modern house to be seen. Here there is no gentle yielding of town to country, and, except at Canea, nothing in the way of a suburb. The town has in many cases shrunk back from the city wall, but has never flowed beyond it. Through the dark tunnel of the gate you pass at once into the open country of corn and flowers.

The villages have no walls, but they also end abruptly. The houses cluster together for mutual protection. Around them lie the olive groves and cultivated lands. There are few scattered farm-houses, save in the west of the island. The country between one village and another has an awesome loneliness that reminds one of the days not so very long ago, when battle, murder, and sudden death waited for solitary travellers on the country roads.

The country folk are charming. They have simplicity, dignity, humour, and, in the east of the island at any rate, an unvarying friendliness. Class distinctions are forgotten outside the towns, but it is no drawback to be provided with introductions from Cretan notables. The hospitality offered is various. In one week we were the

guests of a bishop, an abbot, an officer of gendarmerie, and a cheesemonger. In each case we were treated so hospitably that it disturbed us to reflect on the expense and trouble to which our hosts had put themselves and for which we could offer no immediate recompense.

A Cretan April has something of the atmosphere of Chaucer's spring mornings—a certain indescribable, inexplicable hopefulness. The country still seems very young in spite of its four thousand years of civilization. Its new birth counts almost within the decade, and its history is still in the making. Modern events move so fast that each spring sees some fresh development in the political situation. Crete to-day has perhaps something of the charm that drew poets to Italy in the middle of the nineteenth century—the charm of a political drama acted by beautiful people on a beautiful stage. Patriotism is still a passion on this island, for which men died yesterday and are ready to die to-morrow.

CHAPTER II

THE THIRSTY ARGIVE PLAIN

I

NAUPLIA

THE approach to the Greek mainland shows a succession of powdery white headlands, barren and shapely. Fertile plains and wooded hills are hidden away inland. Greece fronts the outer world with a classical severity. Her beauty is not the obvious, delicious loveliness of moister climates: it is joy of form rather than wealth of decoration. After the subtle modelling of a grey Greek mountain the Alps seem like *nouveaux riches* with their unrestrained purples, their noisy gorges, and dazzling heights.

Nor would I exchange the nudity of Greece for the luxuriant draperies of Italy. Forgive me, Italy! The comparison was thrust upon me here by the very name of the bay to which our Greek steamer is heading, Nauplia, "*Napoli di Romagna*," as the Venetians called it. This little Greek Naples lies at the head of a long gulf almost land-locked by the eastern headlands of Argolis. The rocky island of Spetzia lies like another Capri at the entrance to the bay.

The citadel watching the bay,
The bay with the town in its arms,
The town shining white as the spray
Of the sapphire sea-wave on the rock,
Where the rock stars the girdle of sea
White-ringed

Had Meredith seen Nauplia in a vision when he wrote those lines ? They are all here : the bay, the citadel, the town, the rock.

Behind the town rises the sharp beak of the citadel hill (Palamidi). Here on the Feast of St. Andrew we saw citizens climb at daybreak to celebrate their Panegyris. The fortress on the top is a prison where criminals are kept in barred cells round an open courtyard. Six or seven are shut up together and press for front places at the bars, that they may hold out for sale the bone knives and beads that they have carved. It is a black contrast to the crowd of virtuous citizens who dance on the hill-top a hundred paces away. The castle-crowned rock in the harbour (Itsh-kaleh) is also a place of grim association, the home of the public executioner.

The town itself is a pleasant place where one can stay in comfort for some days, visiting Epidaurus (one of the most famous rest-cures of the ancient world) and the homes of Homer's heroes : Tiryns, Argos, Mycenæ.

Tiryns lies on a long, low ridge, rising abruptly from the flats by the shore. It is not a natural fortress, but its ancient masters once turned it into an impregnable stronghold. The outer walls are made of giant blocks of masonry, huge enough to give rise to the legend that they had been piled together by the hands of Cyclops. The main approach winds half round the fortress, so that though the chief gateway lies to the east a stranger entering the palace would find that the road had led him round the south angle of the building, so that he finally entered from the west, having passed three successive gates and three courtyards. The last court brought him opposite the hall of the ancient palace, the *megaron*, where the square of the central hearth is still marked by the bases of four columns that supported the roof. By this hearth the master of the house would have his seat, and often the lady also. When Odysseus reached the

country of the Phæacians, the Princess Nausicaa directed him to her father's palace, and the brief words in which she described to him the home-scene make a picture that fits well the outline of Tiryns :—

“But when thou art within the shadow of the halls and the court, pass quickly through the great chamber, till thou comest to my mother, who sits at the hearth in the light of the fire weaving yarn of sea-purple stain, a wonder to behold. Her chair is leaned against a pillar and her maidens sit behind her. And there my father's throne leans close to hers, wherein he sits and drinks his wine like an immortal.”

But though the lady of the house might share her husband's hearthside seat, the women's apartments lay in another part of the palace, removed from the coming and going of the chief rooms. Here at Tiryns they are found behind and a little to the left of the men's *megaron*. The women's *megaron* is a smaller building, marked by the same square hearth in the centre. There seems no direct communication between the two, although but a single wall divides them. The women's rooms are reached by a side entrance from the open forecourt, and in order to go from the men's to the women's *megaron* it is necessary to pass right round at the back of the men's *megaron* through a number of small rooms, probably the household offices. The first of these is the bathroom, where the guests in Homeric story are conducted on first arrival. This must be the reason why it is placed so near to the main living-room. It is a small, square chamber, the floor composed of one huge stone slab, and on this was placed the bath of baked clay, an oblong tub perhaps decorated with brown paint, such as has been found in other Mycenæan houses. A stone pipe carried off the waste water from a square gutter in the floor. The walls seem to have been panelled with wood—altogether a noble bathroom and no doubt

one of the most important places in the house. Beyond the women's apartments run dark galleries with sloping roofs; they are built in the thickness of the wall and may have served as magazines for storing provisions and household goods. The shepherds in later days have found them a welcome fold for their sheep, and the walls have been rubbed by soft, oily fleeces till they shine. Altogether a roomy, hospitable house, with large forecourts, where dependents could come and go, or petitioners wait; with ample accommodation for household and guests; and with these great store-chambers for the hoarded wealth of the kings. The walls of the chief living-rooms were probably gay with frescoes, their doors decorated with slabs of inlay, the floors in some instances ornamented with cobbles fixed in lime and perhaps coloured. The lower slope of the hill was no doubt devoted to the military needs of the settlement.

There are so many points of obvious resemblance between this type of house and those described in the *Odyssey* and *Iliad*, that one would like to think of Tiryns as one of the very homes for which the Argive heroes sighed. At any rate, here is a type of house that lasted long and was known in many different parts of the Mycenæan world. At Mycenæ, and at Gla in Bœotia, much the same ground-plan is found. Even the old house of Erechtheus on the Acropolis at Athens shows remains of the same central hearth with its four supporting pillars.

The ground round Tiryns was, and is still, well suited for cultivation. It was, in fact, once chosen as the site for an agricultural college, and to that epoch belong the slender dark cypresses that become so familiar in the views of Nauplia. The palaces that Homer knew were surrounded not only with farmland, but also with what we should call a pleasure garden. I should like to fancy the goodly palace of Tiryns set round with a pleasaunce

such as he describes around the palace of the Phæacian king :—

“Without the courtyard, hard by the door, is a great garden, of four ploughgates, and a hedge runs round on either side. And there grow tall trees blossoming—pear-trees and pomegranates, and apple-trees with bright fruit, and sweet figs and olives in their bloom. The fruit of these trees never perisheth, neither faileth winter nor summer, enduring all the year through. Evermore the west wind blowing brings some fruits to birth and ripens others. Pear upon pear waxes old, and apple on apple, yea, and cluster ripens upon cluster of the grape, and fig upon fig. There too hath he a fruitful vineyard planted, whereof the one part is being dried by the heat, a sunny plot of level ground, while other grapes men are gathering, and yet others they are treading in the winepress. In the foremost row are unripe grapes that cast the blossom, and others there be that are growing black to vintaging. There too skirting the furthest line, are all manner of garden beds, planted trimly, that are fresh continually, and therein are two fountains of water, whereof one scatters his streams all about the garden, and the other runs over against it beneath the threshold of the courtyard and issues by the lofty house.”

This is a picture of Tiryns as it may have been in the day of Homer's heroes, and the site, as Schliemann left it after his excavations, gave a good impression of the typical Mycenæan palace. During the past few years the German Institute of Archæology has carried on fresh excavations, and the results show that they were right in supposing that Schliemann had by no means exhausted the site. They have brought to light traces of a lower town surrounding the citadel, and beneath the Mycenæan palace they have found older buildings. In this earlier settlement there were frescoes allied in subject and in treatment to the frescoes found in the



WALL-PAINTING FROM TIRYNS: BOAR-HUNT

AFTER RODENWALDT, "TIRYNS," BY PERMISSION OF THE GERMAN ARCHAEOLOGICAL INSTITUTE
ATHENS

great palace at Knossos (see p. 22), and there were also two great halls with painted stucco floors. The mural paintings have been broken into innumerable fragments, and the labour of reconstruction is increased by the fact that it is very seldom that two fragments actually join. Blue and brown are the predominating colours, and there are bright touches of red. When this gigantic jig-saw puzzle has been put together with missing pieces indicated by the same clever artist who restored the frescoes at Knossos, it is hoped that the paintings from Tiryns will be another great feature for the National Museum at Athens. The reconstruction has already advanced sufficiently to show that in the earliest palace there was a life-size procession of warriors; from the Mycenæan palace comes a spirited boar-hunt (Plate 3), with women watching the scene from a safe distance in chariots. Once more one marvels at Time's trickery, which has taken from us every painting of the great classical age in Greece, and has left us these pictures of an earlier millennium.

II

MYCENÆ

The sweltering Argive Plain lies like a tortoise, its hind legs to the sea, its head stretching up into the mountains of Tenea. High above the eye of the tortoise Mycenæ lies. Nauplia is set in the right foot. Argos in the centre.

From Nauplia to Mycenæ is a short run by train. The line follows the coast as far as Argos, passes under the headland of Larissa, and then turns north across a plain that seems always ten degrees hotter than the rest of the country. It lies low, shut in by hills on all sides

except towards the sea. Mycenæ commands the passes through the hills behind and keeps watch over plain and sea below. Yet one looks in vain for a frowning Acropolis dominating the landscape. In spite of its 2,000 feet of height Mycenæ is not a conspicuous landmark. It is set on one of a series of foot-hills which are dwarfed by the mountain-range behind. In the dry, scattered light of noon, mountains, foot-hills, and citadel assume one monotonous tone of broken grey. The citadel is placed just as Homer described it "in midmost Argos," hidden away among her stony heights.

The train stops at a little wayside station guarded by a single row of eucalyptus trees, from which a narrow ribbon of road runs up to the modest inn, that blushes a bright pink, and calls itself "The Beautiful Helen." No wheeled vehicles are likely to be found at the station, but a brown boy in the grey cotton smock of the country takes charge of travellers' bags and puts them on the inevitable mule. When we last stayed at the Beautiful Helen we were impressed with the cleanliness, unusual in small Greek inns. Our host told us that he had acted foreman to the American excavators at Corinth and had learnt there that the type of traveller who would come to Mycenæ would not grumble at simplicity if he could have a clean bed and an omelette for breakfast. He proudly showed us the white enamel washing apparatus, and a panoply of bedding spread out to air on the balcony. The homestead behind the inn gave attractive glimpses of "works and days" in a modern Argive version. I have a vivid recollection of some dozen peasants clothed in loose blue linen, wielding their wooden shovels with laughter and merrymaking, while the chaff from the threshing-floor made dusty the rose of a sultry twilight. This was when we returned to our pleasant quarters at the end of a long day among the stones on the Acropolis.

From this homestead the road runs uphill, and soon the lines of boulders mark the outer lines of the fortress and the remains of a prehistoric bridge across a ravine. On the left of the road is the entrance to the magnificent beehive tomb shown to Pausanias and other travellers as the Treasury of Atreus. One can but be grateful that the old picturesque, inaccurate names are still allowed to linger. Tomb A and Tomb B would convey little to the imagination, while the present name suggests the natural mistake of the first discoverers who found a sepulchre so gorgeous that it seemed to them a king's hidden treasure-chamber. Atreus, son of Pelops and father of Agamemnon, was just the kind of personage, on the borderland of myth and history, who would benefit, so to speak, by the touch of reality, by association with visible remains, so to Atreus the treasure-house was assigned.

The wanderings of the two carved shafts that flanked the doorway of this tomb illustrate well the kind of vicissitudes that have beset the stones of ancient Greece. The uppermost part of the right-hand shaft was used as the lintel of a mosque in Argos, and to adapt it to that purpose a large portion of the outer surface was hewn away. The greater part of the left and the upper part of the right shaft were removed to Ireland in 1810 by the then Lord Sligo. They were given to him by Veli Pasha, Governor of the Morea, in memory of a picnic party at Mycenæ, which seems to have ended in a little informal excavation. The present Marquis of Sligo has presented these pieces of the columns to the British Museum, where they now stand in a commanding position. A complete restoration of the doorway that once contained them has been set up at the end of the Archaic Room among the Greek marbles. It gives an idea of regal opulence, with which the interior of the tomb is in keeping—the burial-place of a great king.

A passage of squared stones led down into the hill-side where semi-columns in dark grey stone supported a lintel crowned with slabs of red porphyry. The vaulted tomb itself is cut out of the earth ; from the outside nothing but the entrance to the passage was visible, and this was probably filled in with earth after the burial. Once inside the columned inner entrance a large room is revealed, 50 feet high, and shaped like a beehive. Think of its dusky magnificence as it lay hidden through the centuries gloriously decorated with gold rosettes and paintings ! Through this large hall is a smaller inner chamber, the tomb proper, which could be sealed up and made doubly secure. The other tombs seen by the roadside on the way up to Mycenæ are repetitions, more or less imperfect, of this famous building.

A turn in the road and the Lion Gate is before us. Solid stone lintels crowned by a massive slab of stone on which are carved two lions on either side of a blank column.

Why is the column there ? The answer to that question might keep us waiting outside the gate all day. To divine the meaning of the column one must turn to Sir Arthur Evans' fascinating work on "Tree and Pillar Cult." It is a mistake to suppose that the most primitive ideas are the most simple. The connection of the god with the tree or pillar—one might almost say his evolution from the tree or pillar—is particularly hard to define since the thought of primitive man was in itself confused. The name "Lion Gate" is to this extent a misnomer, since it gives the lions the first importance, whereas they are but heraldic supporters to the column between them. The column may be said to stand for the deity, and links the dwellers in Mycenæ with that ancient form of religion—the worship of stocks and stones. It is something of a mental exertion to forget the later hierarchy of Hellenic gods, and to purge our minds of all

superfluous knowledge as we pass under this gate that is so old and so simple and so mysterious.

Inside the gate and close to it is the circle of masonry enclosing the royal tombs discovered by Schliemann. Here most of the golden treasures were found, the death mask of the king, the swords, the cups, the diadems—all the wealth that has justified the Homeric epithet of “golden Mycenæ.”

The other scattered remains on the hill-top are more suggestive taken as a whole than studied individually. There are walls of dwelling-houses, and the lines of a palace which are best interpreted by the ground-plan of Tiryns. It is the situation of the citadel that kindles the imagination more than any study of the stones. Except on the side of the Lion Gate the ground drops steeply from the summit : on the south-east it is even precipitous. Yet the natural strength of the position was not considered sufficient protection. Unlike the low-lying, unwall'd cities of her predecessors in Crete, Mycenæ has been walled and rewalled at different dates and in different styles. Sitting among the low stones of the old palace, one looks across “thirsty, horsebearing Argos” to the shining shield of sea, seeing in vision the long, open boats that once carried the princes of the Peloponnese, their gilded bronze, their terrible plumes, their tents, and their followers to the plains of windy Troy : “They set up their mast and spread the white sail forth, and the wind filled the sail’s belly and the dark wave sang loud about the stern, as the ship made way and sped across the wave accomplishing the journey.”

This is the place to read again Achilles’ defiance of Agamemnon : it shows the spirit in which some of that host set out, and also the unsatisfactory nature of that indefinite headship which the King of Mycenæ was able to claim over the other lords of the Peloponnese. “Ah me, thou clothed in shamelessness, thou of the

crafty mind, how shall any Achaian hearken to thy bidding with all his heart, be it to go a journey or to fight the foe again? Not by reason of the Trojan spearmen came I hither to fight, for they have not wronged me; never did they harry mine oxen nor my horses, nor even waste my harvest in deep-soiled Phthia, the nurse of men; seeing there lieth between us long space of shadowy mountains and echoing sea: but thee, thou shameless one, we followed hither, to make thee glad by earning recompense at the Trojan's hands for Menelaos and for thee, thou dog-face!" Certainly the King of Mycenæ was not followed from pure devotion.

Here on his hill-top palace the tragedy of Agamemnon's life was finished. Homer shows the beginning of the drama. It is to Æschylus that one turns for the end. Æschylus himself had probably never visited Mycenæ since he laid the scene of his play at Argos. He had not realized how noble a watch-tower this palace made and how many hours there were for Clytemnestra to lay her plots. If it were morning when the long boats were sighted over sea, it would be evening before Agamemnon's triumphal chariot reached the Lion Gate. In the play the moments are compressed. The watchers in the tower have hardly brought the queen news of his arrival on the shore, before the shouts outside proclaim his return to the palace. The chariot is slowly drawn within the gates and in it stands wide-ruling Agamemnon in his golden armour and nodding plumes; and beside him the captive prophetess. Clytemnestra welcomes him, spreading carpets at his feet. She leads him to the bathroom. These hard stones that now lie baking in the sun she covered with soft drapery, and hidden among the drapery the noose and net. The final pause, the cry of anguish, and then the cry of triumph as the queen shows her bloody axe to the sunshine. "Thus and thus I smote him." This is the tremendous drama that opens the long

trilogy of the House of Atreus. One cannot visit Mycenæ and ignore Æschylus any more than one can visit Agincourt without Shakespeare.

There is no need to ask how much is poetry, how much is literature? This is the wine of imagination that has turned men of business into tomb-hunters and archæologists.

In the early part of last century there was a young student who did not trouble over nice distinctions between literature and history. He studied his Homer as the Bible was studied before the days of the higher criticism. He had the faith that can remove mountains, and he lived to show tangible proofs of his belief. This boy was Henry Schliemann. His story still reads like a fairy-tale. Single-handed he amassed a fortune that enabled him to realize his youthful dreams and to carry on excavations on the traditional sites of the Homeric world. At Troy he showed the walls of successive settlements reaching back to the Stone Age. At Tiryns and at Mycenæ he laid bare these palaces and tombs of the Argive kings. In the tombs he found treasures of a civilization fully as wonderful as that described by Homer.

It is in the Central Museum at Athens that the treasures of Schliemann's Mycenæan Age are stored. The so-called "Mycenæan Room" (just opposite the main entrance) has been designed to harmonize with its contents. The walls are decorated with reproductions of Mycenæan patterns, correct both in form and colour, and on the floor there are the same spiral motives in mosaic. In the large glass cases in the centre of the room are set out the contents of the royal tombs found by Schliemann at Mycenæ: the death-mask of some great king, his crown and ornaments represented in fine gold leaf. On the top of one of these cases stands an alabaster cup with three upcurving handles. These grandiloquent curves are not suggestive of stone-work. The cup must have

been manufactured as something of a *tour de force*, in imitation no doubt of some metal original. It is remarkable that three out of the original four handles have survived. Then there is the golden Nestor cup, so called because it recalls Homer's description of the cup that Nestor used in the camp before Troy :—

“A right goodly cup that the old man brought from home, embossed with studs of gold, and four handles that were to it, and round each two golden doves were feeding, and to the cup were two feet below. Another man could scarce have lifted the cup from the table when it was full, but Nestor the Old raised it easily. In this cup the woman like unto the goddesses mixed a mess for them, with Pramnian wine, and therein grated cheese of goats' milk, with a grater of bronze, and scattered white barley thereon and bade them drink, whenas she had made ready the mess.”

At the far end of the room, set each on its own pedestal, are two small golden cups found in a tomb at Vaphio, near Sparta. These may very well have been imported from Crete. Here once more is the world of the Cretan bull-fight—only on these cups it is not the fight that is shown us but the preliminary scenes of capture. A bull-hunt is going forward ; with the help of a decoy cow naked men are driving the bulls into a trap. The figures of the men are attenuated and uninteresting when compared with the masterly treatment of the animals. The craftsman who did not shrink from rendering in beaten gold the figure of a tripped bull rolling in a net could also handle with delicious satire the innocent expression on the face of the cow who is leading her companions to their fate. These cups look as if they were made in solid metal. In reality there is an inner cup of smooth gold over which the embossed outer cup is fitted, leaving a hollow space between. The handle is a beautiful little bit of constructive goldsmith's work.

Beside the cups is an inlaid dagger showing a lion-hunt. The huntsmen are true Cretans with their slim, naked bodies and big shields. The Mycenæan, no less than the Briton, seems to have known that paradoxical sportsman's instinct that loved and drew and hunted and slew the wild creatures around him.

Swords and golden shields are here too, and an infinite number of small discs of beaten gold (perhaps ornaments on a mummy case recalling the golden armour and raiment which the king had worn in life), an abundance also of gold rings, bracelets, and diadems. Looking into these glittering cases we understand how the stories of the "Age of Gold" lingered on into Hesiod's day, and how the poets of Homer's time loved to enlarge on the glories of the "King of Mycenæ rich in gold." Read how Agamemnon arrayed himself for battle :—

"Then the son of Atreus cried aloud and bade the Argives arm them, and himself amid them did on the flashing bronze. First he fastened fair greaves about his legs, fitted with ankle-clasps of silver ; next again he did his breast-plate about his breast, the breast-plate that in time past Kinyras gave him for a guest-gift. For afar in Cyprus did Kinyras hear the mighty rumour how that the Achæians were about to sail forth to Troy in their ships, wherefore did Kinyras give him the breast-plate, to do pleasure to the king. Now therein were ten courses of black cyanus, and twelve of gold, and twenty of tin, and dark blue snakes writhed up towards the neck, three on either side, like rainbows that the son of Kronos has set in the clouds, a marvel of the mortal tribes of men. And round his shoulders he cast his sword, wherein shone studs of gold, but the scabbard about it was silver fitted with golden chains. And he took his richly-dight shield of his valour that covereth all the body of a man, a fair shield, and round about it were ten circles of bronze

and thereon were twenty white bosses of tin, and one in the midst of black cyanus. And thereon was embossed the Gorgon fell of aspect, glaring terribly, and about her were Dread and Terror. And from the shield was hung a baldric of silver, and thereon was curled a snake of cyanus; three heads interlaced had he growing out of one neck. And on his head Agamemnon set a two-crested helm with fourfold plate and plume of horse-hair, and terribly the crest nodded from above. And he grasped two strong spears, shod with bronze, and keen, and far forth from him into the heaven shone the bronze, and thereat Hera and Athena thundered, honouring the King of Mycenæ rich in gold."

Reading this description and then looking at the contents of the royal tombs found by Schliemann at Mycenæ it is easy to sympathize with the first burst of surprise and admiration that made Schliemann himself and the scholars of his day ready to believe that these were the very tombs of Homer's heroes. It was a thrilling moment when the archæologist asserted that he had found the very features of Agamemnon in his death-mask. Soon came the inevitable reaction. The theory did not bear investigation, and the scientific world drew away to the extreme of caution and placed unknown centuries between the tombs at Mycenæ and the Achæians of whom Homer sang. Gladstone was one of the first scholars who reconsidered the evidence and showed how the discoveries at Mycenæ could rightly be used to illustrate Homer. It was suggested that the poems of Homer might belong to a period of fusion between the two races: that they date from a time soon after a race of warriors from the North had established themselves in the homes of Mycenæan culture. These men with weapons of iron and habits of hardihood replaced but did not destroy the luxurious, art-loving subjects of Mycenæ. In spite of the change of race there was continuity of tradition. The conquerors respected the

refinements of the old civilization, and prided themselves on their treasures of Mycenæan workmanship, such as the elaborately ornamented shield of Achilles and Nestor's cup. A garment or a vessel "well-wrought," it was this that the northern spirit delighted in, and this that the southern craftsman could so well achieve.

So Schliemann has proved his main point, and has shown that these Homeric epics have a basis of fact. After all, Homer was a poet dreaming of an age of gold, not an archæologist describing the Bronze or Iron Age. Who can be sorry that he did not know the real Mycenæ well enough to write of heroines in flowered bell-skirts, stiff jackets, and high hats, instead of his own gentle chiton-clad women in their "great shining robes, light of woof and gracious" ?

There are some to whom the great Mycenæan Room in the museum at Athens must serve instead of a visit to Crete or Mycenæ. To these I would commend the excellent reproductions in the glass case labelled "Knossos." Here are the faience figurines, the gilded bull, and many other of Sir Arthur Evans' most striking finds. Those who cannot travel even to Athens will find the same reproductions and many original objects from Knossos in the Ashmolean Museum at Oxford. Some reproductions are also shown in the First Vase Room at the British Museum.

CHAPTER III

LEGENDS OF THE ACROPOLIS

IN Greece each district has its own cycle of legend. The most barren landscape is peopled with gracious forms and the silence filled with echoes of past music. Subtle as the fragrance of hidden flowers, elusive as a childish memory, these ghosts of bygone faith still haunt their old homes to touch us with the intimate note of hidden personality. Later, more stirring memories added sanctity to the already sacred soil. The spirit of Theseus lingered at Marathon, and at the time of the battle he was seen to lead the charge against the Persians, while in later days it was the ghosts of the victorious legions themselves that haunted the spot.

It is this double background of tradition—legend breaking through upon history, and history reaching back into legend—that makes travel in Greece so much a matter of the individual imagination. That which is to one man cause for disappointment may to another bring rapturous exaltation. Of Attica this is specially true, since outwardly it is less blessed by Nature than other parts of Greece. Those who take Attica at its surface value find themselves alone with stones and bushes under a hot sky. Those who approach her as her own sons, piously remembering the footsteps of gods and heroes, may still know the joy of being young in the world's youth.

Little Attica I What a scrap of the earth's surface it is!

From the Bay of Phalerum and the harbour of Piræus there runs inland a ten-mile stretch of country, for the most part stony and flat—the plain of the river Cephissus. This river itself is often dry in summer, its course marked only by a slender line of dark green foliage, where olive and oleander have sent their roots to the hidden moisture of its bed. In the middle of the plain a limestone ridge mounts to the sharp profile of Lycabettus, breaks steeply to that queer rock known as the “frog’s mouth,” and then reappears again in the abrupt cliff of the Acropolis. The ridge behind Lycabettus is called *Turkovoumi*, the “Turks’ Mountains.” One fancies a note of satire in the name. As a rule the hills were the home of the Christians. The only mountain the Turks could boast of was this absurd miniature range. The real hills, the “violet crown” of Athens, which were never occupied by the Turks, are *Hymettus*, *Pentelicus*, *Parnes*. They enclose the plain on its three landward sides.

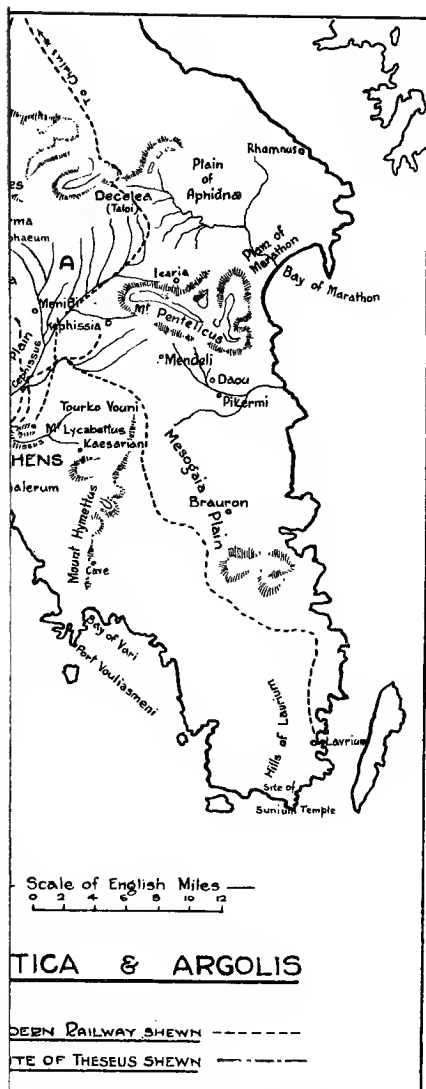
Behind each of these mountain masses is another piece of Attica not visible from Athens. Between *Hymettus* and the eastward sea lies the *Mesogaia Plain*. It is larger and more fertile than the plain of the *Cephissus*, and yet figures little in history, for no highroad passes through it. Attica’s back-parlour, should one say? Behind *Pentelicus* lies the plain of *Aphidnæ*, lying saucer-like with a ring of hills around it and a piece of rising ground in its centre. The railway to *Chalcis* skirts the edge of this country, a pleasant, wooded region. The great plain behind *Parnes* does not belong to Attica but to *Bœotia*. *Parnes* is the one landward boundary of the Attic peninsula. Towards the west her soaring ridges dip to *Mount Ægaleus*, and behind these is the sea-girt *Thriasian plain* around *Eleusis*, now reckoned as Attic territory.

This, then, is Attica at its “surface value”: an Acropolis, a rocky ridge, an oval plain, a ring of hills, three other hidden plains, and a rocky coast. Superficially

it is not much larger than a good-sized Scotch shooting, and in the best sense of the word Athens itself is still but a country town. In the heart of the city you catch glimpses of the guardian hills. From the Acropolis Hymettus seems near at hand, every cleft and gully shining distinct, so that it is hard to believe the summit is three hours away. At the further, narrower end of the plain, Pentelicus shows white scars where the marble has been quarried from her side. To the left Parnes, perhaps the most beautiful of the three sister mountains, shows the cliff of Harma, a sharp nick in her flowing outline. This is the landward view from the Acropolis.

On the other side, looking down from the Acropolis towards the sea, the plain seems almost toy-like, ridged with rock and dotted with diminutive dwellings. Dark lines of factories begin to streak the landscape as it closes to the harbour of Piræus. Then carrying the eye further, across the sea and across the crystal gulfs of air, the pointed silhouette of Ægina shows wine-dark against the blue. The Athenians could call it their eyesore in those old days when politics counted for so much more than landscape. To-day Athens might change the metaphor and know Ægina as "the apple of her eye," this expressive point of darker colour set in the blue circle of the gulf. Behind Ægina are the airy peaks of the Peloponnese, and faintest among these the outline of the Trœzen hills around the Argive Plain. These are the hills over which Theseus journeyed to Athens, coming, as all heroes should, from "over the hills and far away." This is the magic of the name Trœzen. To us in Athens it stands for the land of the bluest distance "across the far horizon's rim," the land from which came the prince-adventurer to win a crown and make a city.

The modern traveller who approaches Athens by the railway finds himself travelling in the footsteps of Theseus, and from the Isthmus onwards the stages of the



journey are marked by the names of the places where he met and overcame the monsters in his path. It is at the Isthmus of Corinth that the road from Trœzen joins the railway from Patras. The pine-trees still grow here as in the days when Theseus met Sinis "the pine-bender" and treated him to a taste of his own ingenious devilry. Sinis waited here for travellers and had invented a method of his own for destroying them. Vase paintings show Theseus bending down the pine-tree to which he has already attached the giant. When the hand of Theseus is removed the tree will spring back and Sinis will be torn in two or flung into the air. The train stops again at Crommyon, where Theseus slew the wild sow Phæa—"foul old landed-proprietress," as Pater styles her. Now the road narrows to a single path, winding round the side of the cliffs above the sea. Here Sciron lay in wait; it was his pleasant custom to hurl wayfarers into the sea, till Theseus came and with fine poetic justice flung him over the cliff's edge to fatten his own turtle. There truly enough in the transparent, green waters below, one may still see from the railway a rock shaped like a sea-tortoise, its lean head protruding from its rounded back. This narrow pass above the sea has in all times suggested itself as an excellent place for highway robbery, and the task of Theseus had to be repeated every few decades until the railway did its civilizing work.

Eleusis, the next point of the journey, recalls another cycle of legend, and that perhaps the most beautiful of all Greek mythology, but for the moment we must forget the weary woman sitting by the wayside at the virgin's well, "where the people of Eleusis come to draw water under the shadow of an olive-tree." In the story of Theseus Eleusis is the scene of the great wrestling match where he met and threw Kerkyon, king of this district. Hitherto his combats had been with monsters outside the pale of society. Now for the first time he is pitted against the

forces of a rival state. Kerkyon was a king, and though in the Theseus myth he figures as an oppressor, in the Eleusinian legend he bears a different character. His chief crime seems to have been that his state blocked the landward road to Athens. Theseus wrestled with and overthrew him.

At Eleusis the railway leaves the path of Theseus and bears to the east in order to enter the Cephissian Plain by the pass between Mount Ægaleus and Parnes. Theseus bore right on by the Sacred Way, now the main road from Eleusis to Athens, which crosses the hill-barrier of Corydallus. This pass is marked by the monastery of Daphni, and at the little inn here the peasants still pause for their noonday halt under the shade of the wooded hill-side. Here Procrustes, first of all Greek innkeepers, waited to offer his hospitality to strangers. With that naïve disregard of facts that still characterizes the profession, he insisted that the traveller should adapt himself to the accommodation offered, rather than adapt the accommodation to the traveller. To this end he stretched on a rack the limbs of those that were too short for his bed or lopped off the extremities of those that were too large. Theseus being fashioned in heroic mould exactly fitted the Procrustean bed and afterwards dealt with his host as he deserved. Then on, down the long slope of road to Athens. Here he made himself known to his father Ægeus, brought the turbulent nobles into subjection, and so ends happily this cycle of his travels. In the latter part of the Theseus legend the world is no longer bounded by the Athenian horizon. Wider issues are involved. The story of Theseus in Crete, which has been told in a previous chapter, shows Athens emerging from a subordinate position in the great Minoan Empire.

Once established in Athens, Theseus seems to change from a hero of romance into a human king with very human failings. Without going so far as Grote, who

holds that the possession of kingly power at once converted the "athletic and amorous knight-errant" into a "profound and long-sighted politician," one admits that Theseus now moves in a different atmosphere. A governor grappling with quite real political problems is a less romantic figure than a hero slaying a monster, but let us take Theseus seriously and see a unity of purpose even in his knight-errantry. Is not Theseus in his aspect of road-maker, giant-killer, and traveller's friend, the champion of unity no less than Theseus the king converting the inhabitants of Attica into citizens of Athens? And even in his kingly days adventures in plenty remained to him. Plutarch tells us how the Amazons invaded Attica—"an undertaking neither trifling nor feminine." Whom or what this invasion exactly indicates the pious traveller does not inquire. There seems, however, to have been a time when the very existence of the State was in danger. The invaders must have pressed Athens hard, for the spots dedicated to the memory of Theseus' victory over the Amazons are close to the Acropolis itself. A fine picture this of the women warriors galloping down the Cephissian Plain and closing in on the rock citadel of the maiden goddess, herself also a rare lover of fight.

A later development of the Theseus legend deals with his philanderings with Helen at Aphidnæ and his rescue of Persephone from the underworld. Indeed, according to tradition, it was his continued absence on heroic enterprise that lost him his kingdom, for while he was away from Athens Castor and Pollux, the brothers of Helen, brought an army into Attica and ravaged the country to avenge the rape of their sister. (This is of course another version of the Homeric story in which Helen is carried off by Paris.) The Athenians were now suffering for the sins of their king. Menestheus, a descendant of the royal line of Erechtheus, took this opportunity of stirring up rebellion, and when Theseus returned he found

it impossible to recover the government. Theseus was exiled and never returned to Athens in his lifetime, though his bones were afterwards brought home and buried in the shrine that bore his name.

However the Theseus myth is to be viewed, whether as Pater saw it, "the type of progress triumphant through injustice, set on improving things off the face of the earth," or as the type of social order developing, organizing, and unifying heterogeneous elements into a single state : whether you curse him as a Radical or bless him as a reformer, whether you look upon him as a man, a dynasty, a type, or a purely mythological invention, is all beside the mark here. What we want to know is what he meant to the Athenians who first told his story. To them Theseus stood for the making of Attica, the ingathering of the gods on the Acropolis, and the establishment of Athena's supremacy :—

"When Theseus came to the throne, he, being a powerful as well as a wise ruler, among other improvements in the administration of the country, dissolved the councils and separate governments and united all the inhabitants of Attica in the present city, establishing one council and one town hall. They continued to live on their own lands, but he compelled them to resort to Athens as their metropolis, and henceforward they were all inscribed in the roll of her citizens. A great city thus arose, which was handed down by Theseus to his descendants, and from his day to this the Athenians have regularly celebrated the national festival of the Synœcia, or 'union of the communes,' in honour of the goddess Athena."

What a picture Thucydides here gives of the peasantry gathered into Athens to vote, to pay taxes, and to worship ! Their daily life goes on as usual on their remote farms, but they have been made to feel themselves members of a greater community. Their eyes are no longer turned to their little village shrine where the sacred fire

burned before a local goddess, but to the Prytaneum, the public hearth of Athens. Here was the outward sign of internal unity.

The removal of the hearth meant the removal of the hearth-deities. It meant the extinction of local patriotism and petty jealousies. The Acropolis rock became the heart of Attica. The magnificent temples built upon it later could not add to its sanctity, however much they added to its glory. The sites were sacred before the shrines came there. Even when Theseus came the Acropolis was so crowded with myths and memories that the divinities from the country (with one exception) had to be accommodated in precincts outside the Acropolis walls.

In our school-days Theseus seemed to come at the beginning of the Athenian legend, but when we stand on the Acropolis he seems more truly at the beginning of Athenian history, and behind him crowd a score of shadowy nightmare forms, half deity, half demon. The rock is theirs, not his. It is worth while to recall these old legends in their early crudity, since it was to commemorate them that the temples were built.

Strange and uncouth as the legends were in their beginning, Pheidias and his followers redeemed them from savagery and shaped them into beauty. The Parthenon frieze shows gods and mortals moving calmly through an ordered world ; in the pediments a cosmic crisis is suggested but it never compromises the dignity of the actors. Looking at them it is hard to realize how much has been tacitly omitted. Giants and monsters have been humanized ; mysterious old goddesses are given youth and beauty ; ugly incidents are forgotten. But for all this the nightmare legends were first in possession, and any study of the Acropolis would be incomplete without them.

The starting-point of Athenian mythology, that which

the Germans would call the "foundation legend," sets forth a rivalry between the goddess Athena and the god Poseidon. On the surface it records the jealousies of two gods, competing for the greatest of Greek cities. But the strife has a deeper significance in the making of Attica. The worship of the new divinity (Athena) triumphs over that of the old sea-god (Poseidon). The olive, emblematic of the ordered life of the husbandman and citizen is preferred to the salt spring, emblematic of the wandering life of the seafarer. I wonder if the Athenians ever reflected how Poseidon had his revenge in the later days of their expansion when the wealth of the city was squandered over fleets that never returned to her shores? There are many versions of the legend. Apollodorus gives in brief the shape into which it finally crystallized :—

"The gods were minded to choose for themselves cities where they should be specially worshipped. Poseidon was the first to reach Attica, where he smote with his trident and made a sea spring up in the midst of the Acrópolis, where it remains to this day and is called the Sea of Erechtheus.¹ Athena followed, and calling Cecrops to be witness that she took the land in possession planted the olive which still grows in the temple of Pandrosus. Then a strife arose concerning the country; so Zeus, to reconcile the rivals, appointed judges, who were not Cecrops and Cranaus as some say, nor yet Erechtheus, but the twelve deities (the Olympian gods). Their decision adjudged the land to Athena upon the witness of Cecrops, and so Athens gained its name, being called after the goddess."

There is another version of the same legend, not without its bearing on modern politics. The story is told by Augustine on the authority of the learned Varro :—

"In the days of King Cecrops the women of Attica took

¹ It may still be seen by the north porch of the Erechtheum (p. 137).

full part in political affairs. When Poseidon and Athena disputed the spiritual patronage of Athens, King Cecrops after consulting an oracle took a referendum vote of the adult inhabitants. The vote was given on grounds of sex, the men voting for sea-power, the women for the goddess of wisdom and needlework. Then, as now, the women had the numerical majority and carried the business in hand. But the men had superior strength and punished the *suffragatrices* by the loss of the vote and otherwise."

This dramatic opening introduces at once almost all the principal actors who figure in the legends of the Acropolis: the divinities Athena, Poseidon, Zeus, and the heroes Erechtheus, Cecrops, Cranaus, Pandrosus.

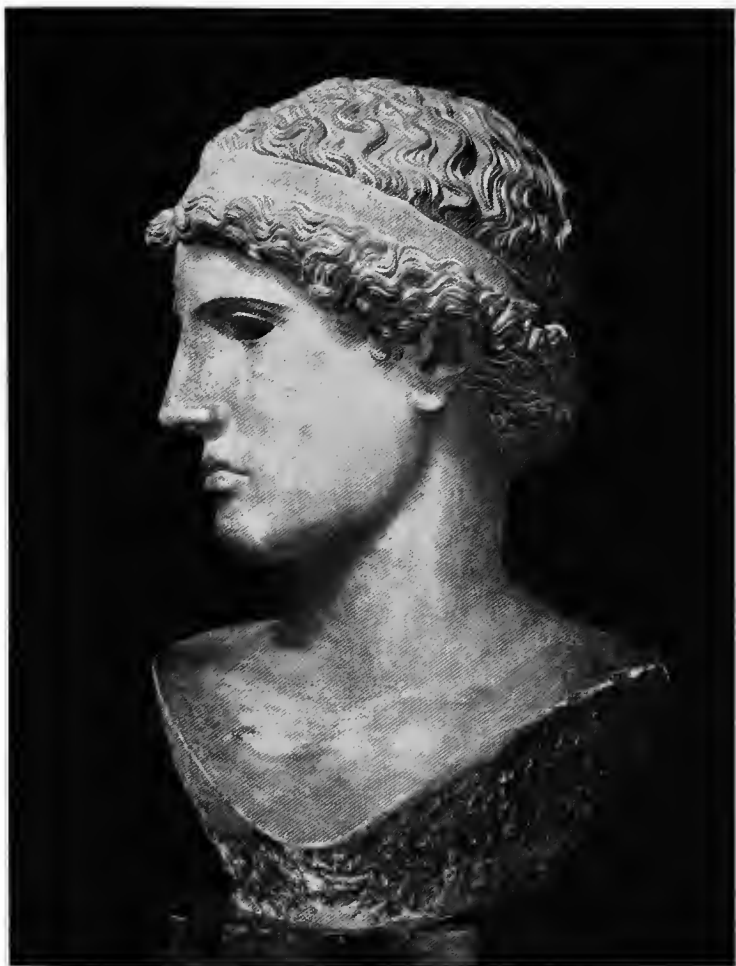
To take Athena first, since it was she who henceforth reigned on the hill-top. How shall we figure her to ourselves—this grey-eyed deity of Athens, whose worship became the inspiration of all notable achievements? The simplest and truest thought of her is perhaps to be found in Homer's line: "The semblance of a woman fair and tall, and skilled in splendid handiwork." Later she assumed many different aspects. On the Acropolis she is figured as Athena of the City; Athena, Giver of Victory; Athena, Giver of Health; Athena the Champion, and Athena the Maid. Yet primarily she stands as the goddess of good handiwork, rejoicing in all things well and temperately wrought. Here on the Acropolis it was the achievement of the politician that was dedicated to her. In their temple in the market-place below, she and her brother Hephæstus accepted in the same spirit the work of the craftsman. How did the Athenian visualize her? It is difficult to say. The great statue in gold and ivory made by Pheidias for the Parthenon¹ is known only from small and incomplete reproductions, but even allowing for this it seems hardly intimate enough to suit

¹ See p. 127.

the character in which the legends show her. Its vague impersonal majesty is more a patriot's image of his city than an artist's conception of womanhood. The so-called "Lemnian" Athena gives perhaps the most winning representation. Here she is as Odysseus knew her in her companionable aspect—active, almost boyish in figure, with a capacity for mirth in the demure lips, which recalls that delicious burst of laughter in Ithaca when she found Odysseus seeking to deceive even her—his monitress. It has been said that this statue, perhaps made for the island of Lemnos, was in antiquity the most popular representation of the goddess. Fitting this to Homer's line we shall gain an idea of what Athena may have been to the Athenian people in those earlier days before her personality was merged in the greatness of the state she typified.

Poseidon, whose real element is the water, remains on the Acropolis hill as something of an interloper. It is true that his salt spring moans with a sound of the sea ; true that the holes of his trident still left on the face of the rock have been cherished by orthodox Athenians as Mohammed's footmark in Jerusalem is cherished by the faithful Mussulman. Still his place is but a secondary one. His worship is confined to a single altar in a temple dedicated to various deities. The defeated rival would have gained more dignity by withdrawing himself altogether from the hill-top. The ocean was still his. He was the maker of storms and earthquakes, and terrible enough to the Athenians both on sea and land.

Zeus also has his shrine on the Acropolis. From earliest times a precinct which now lies north-east of the Parthenon seems to have been sacred to him. His altar here was on the open face of the rock and was not covered by a temple. Here once a year was performed that strange archaic rite in which a bull was slaughtered, and in the trial that followed the blood-



HEAD OF THE LEMNIAN ATHENA BY PHEIDIAS
IN THE BOLOGNA MUSEUM

guiltiness was finally brought home to the axe, which was condemned and executed. Throughout Greece Zeus is of course supreme; yet it sometimes seems as though his very supremacy deprived him of the more intimate personal worship given to the other gods. The local deities gained their popularity from the fact that they were connected with one beloved spot—the home of the worshipper. Thus Athena at Athens, Apollo at Amyclæ, Hera at Argos, were adored with a jealous passion that was more than half patriotism. Zeus was, as a matter of course, supreme everywhere, and therefore had no one special locality for his own intimate possession. At Athens he was altogether eclipsed by his daughter Athena. He had a temple in the Piræus, where the sailor on return gave thanks for a safe voyage: a shrine on the Acropolis, and altars on some neighbouring mountain-tops—together a meagre allowance compared with the fact that on the Acropolis alone Athena seems to have had at one time no less than three temples. It is true that outside the town there stood from the time of Peisistratus onwards the unfinished columns of a temple to Olympian Zeus, and the fact is perhaps not without its significance that the temple to “the god of all the Greeks” remained imperfect through the centuries of independence, while the Greek states were in rivalry with each other, to be finished only when a foreign ruler had taught them the identity of their interests as a nation.

So much for the gods who appear in the legend of Apollodorus. The other characters mentioned belong to that dim race, half human, half divine, whom the Athenians regarded as their progenitors. Various scraps of genealogy have come down to us in which the name of Cecrops, Cranaus, Erechtheus, figure in different relationships, but these mostly bear the mark of later mythological invention. What shadowy personages or

dynasties lie at the back of these traditions who shall say? The Athenians boasted that they were autochthonous, sprung from the earth: earth was their mother; Cecrops, born from the earth, their father. The sanctity attaching to the grave of Cecrops on the Acropolis was therefore a serious matter, and one which, as we shall see in a succeeding chapter, even the enlightened fifth-century Athenian could not suffer any man to trifle with. As if to typify the antiquity of these early kings and their close relationship with earth, the vase paintings show them at times with curling serpents' tails. It is Erechtheus who seems the most nearly human, and he is brought down almost within the vision of history by the fact that, under the first temple on the Acropolis, remains have been traced of the old palace of Erechtheus. Here Homer tells us that Athena dwelt. One of the early legends shows her as the foster-mother of the infant Erichthonius, whom Ge, the earth-mother, had committed to her charge. Athena gave a closed basket containing the babe into the keeping of the three daughters of Cecrops, with strict injunctions that they should on no account look within. She then flew off to Pentelicus and was returning, bearing with her an immense crag with which to buttress up her new abode, when, in mid-air, she met the sacred crow who told her that the daughters of Cecrops had disobeyed her orders. They had opened the casket committed to their charge and there beheld the unbeholdable. In horror at the news Athena dropped her crag, which may still be seen lying out awkwardly in the centre of the plain. (Thus the Athenian mind accounted for the somewhat astonishing appearance of Lycabettus.) The legend ends with the faithless sisters being driven from the Acropolis; in some versions they throw themselves over the cliff, while Pandrosos, the one sister who had not been guilty of the crime, has a precinct set apart for

her on the Acropolis, adjoining the tomb of her father, Cecrops.

These are the old tales, bizarre rather than beautiful. Their crudity seems contrary to the Hellenic spirit until the rationalizing instinct of the classical Greek mind is seen at work. Scraps of primitive legend, survivals of strange ritual, and a series of unmeaning names have to be fitted together so that the Greek may conceive of his past as an orderly whole, not as we see it—a turmoil of light and darkness, with earth-worship, devil-worship, and fertility-charms gradually giving way to higher forms of religion. Such a conception as this was impossible at that day, and since the Greek was both too logical and too sceptical to accept things just as he found them, he made a patchwork mythology, working the old pieces into the pattern and adding, where chronology seemed to demand it, goodly strings of invented names.

Athena, Poseidon, Zeus, Cecrops, Erechtheus, Pandrosos, not to speak of Butes the father-priest, and Ge the earth-mother herself; these seem to have been already established on the Acropolis before the days of Theseus. There is no record of their coming, for they were always there. They are, as it were, the earliest stratum of divinities. Where then should be found room for the newcomers (whom Theseus brought to Athens) from Eleusis and Eleutheræ, from Acharnæ and Brauron? Only one of these "outsiders" was allowed to find a place on the summit of the Acropolis: the Brauronian Artemis, a goddess sufficiently mysterious and uncouth to associate on equal terms with the most autochthonous and serpentine of the "old nobility."

The Artemis from Brauron has her precinct on the south side of the Acropolis between the Propylæa and Parthenon. Perhaps the site was already dedicated to some early worship of the huntress Artemis, dating from days when gods of the chase were the first to be

propitiated. The goddess of Brauron was an old wooden image, little more than a log. The legend of the Brauronian cult was later woven by Euripides into his play "Iphigenia in Tauris." According to this version Iphigenia was not really slain by her father in expiation of his vow, but was miraculously rapt away from the altar of sacrifice by Artemis, the protectress of all young maidens. She was carried to Tauris in the Crimea, where she became a priestess and tended an old wooden image of the goddess. Here her brother Orestes found her ; at her instigation he avenged their father's murder ; afterwards they fled together to Brauron in Attica, taking with them the image, henceforward known as Brauronian Artemis. The after-fate of this statue was a favourite subject of discussion with the ancients. It is clear, however, that the Athenians laid no claim to it. There were two statues in the sanctuary of Brauronian Artemis on the Acropolis, one considerably older than the other, but neither claiming to be the original image from the Crimea, though the shrine on the Acropolis was an important centre of the Brauronian cult. The protector of Iphigenia remains always a woman's goddess, a special protector of maidens and of women in childbirth. Between the ages of five and ten the Athenian maidens accompanied by their parents and led by a priestess were brought to her shrine to perform some obscure ceremony of initiation or propitiation. They must "dance as bears" before the goddess. At first it would seem that they were clad in actual bearskins, but afterwards this came to be replaced by the "saffron robe" of which the women sing in the "Lysistrata" of Aristophanes. The garments worn at this festival were hung as offerings upon the image. Other relics of girlhood were also left here ; a doll, a mirror, a shawl, and on the eve of marriage the bride must bring her girdle as an offering to Artemis.

So, still, in Southern Europe the bride brings her orange-wreath and veil to hang before the image of the Virgin; and so, still, in Japan the little girls bring, not their toys but their first handiwork to their goddess of mercy who combines the tenderness of Artemis for all young things with Athena's love of good work.

The village of Brauron, from which the cult of Artemis came, lies near the one little port of the great Mesogaia Plain behind Hymettus. Each of the three hidden plains of Attica supplied Athens with a new divinity, and one came over the sea from Thrace.

From Aphidnæ, the plain behind Pentelicus, came the two brothers, the Anakes or Dioscuri. Their true Greek home was at Sparta, but the great Twin Brethren could always truly say—

By many names men call us,
In many lands we dwell.

Their presence at Aphidnæ had to be accounted for by the supposition that they were there to look after their truant sister the fair Helen (see p. 71). In Athens their worship took no root and soon disappeared.

It was far otherwise with the two other great divinities who are said to have come to Athens at the time of the Union of Attica: Demeter, who came from Eleusis, and Dionysus, originally a Thracian god who came to Athens from Eleutheræ, a small plain lying behind Parnes. Geographically Eleutheræ would seem to belong to Bœotia rather than to Attica, but its inhabitants "liked the Athenian form of government," says Pausanias, and attached themselves to Athens, bringing with them the ancient image of their god.

The worships of Demeter and Dionysus seem to have been inherently suited to the Athenian temperament. Once introduced they eclipsed the influence of the older

gods. The stories that grew around these two mysterious cults are far removed from the strange old tales of Cecrops, Erechtheus, and the rest. Superstition rises to reverence and dogma changes to poetry.

Yet in a certain sense their worship has the same basis as the religions of the most primitive type. Demeter typifies the fruitful powers of Nature. Dionysus stands for humanity's enjoyment of her gifts. These two never won a place on the summit of the Acropolis, yet in course of time their cults came to fill a more prominent place in the life of the individual citizen than those of the older deities. As Zeus and Athena became more and more the great civic gods, the intimacy of their earlier relations with their worshippers was forgotten. In Attica the teaching of the new gods made an appeal to the individual conscience and to those elements of fervour and of mysticism to which the older Greek religion had paid small heed.

Though Dionysus was brought to Athens from Eleutheræ, he was in reality a god from further north, wafted across the sea from Thrace. He is the god of all benign influences, of the goodly juice of the grape, of the warm south wind, kindly animal affections and the joys of dance and song. As his sacred boat was carried over the waters the sap rose and the masts burst into leaf and fruitage under the spell of his warm breath.

His mother, Semele, a mortal, had perished from the vision of her divine lover in his full glory. Dionysus, prematurely born in that moment of ecstasy, was afterwards sheltered in the thigh of his father, Zeus, until the moment of his rebirth. Hence he is the god of all rapture and exaltation, in one aspect human and approachable, yet in another aspect full of awful godhead. The legend as Euripides presents it in "The Bacchæ" shows him in the later guise. The god comes to Thebes, the home of his mother, Semele. The king, Pentheus, his

own near relation, rejects him with scorn. Dionysus reveals and vindicates himself, and Pentheus is torn in pieces by the frenzy of the Bacchæ. The horror of the tragedy is raised to a point that poetry alone dare touch by the fact that it is the king's own mother who leads the rout. The god has blinded her eyes and in her fervour against the unbeliever she slays her son without recognizing him.

Dionysus soon came to have a number of small shrines in Athens. The exact position of "Dionysus in the marshes," "Dionysus in the market-place," and the relations of these to the celebrated "Place of the winepress," where yearly his mysteries were celebrated, are problems that still tease topographers. One of his small shrines can be seen in the maze of excavations to the west of the Acropolis. It is marked by a small winepress, and over it was found the club-house built by a Dionysiac Society of Roman times. His greatest monument is the noble theatre on the south of the Acropolis, where two of his temples also stand (see p. 151).

With Demeter the case was different. Her temple at Eleusis was so near that the pilgrimage thither became an event of ever greater importance. In contrast with the number of shrines with which Dionysus was honoured Demeter seems to have had only two temples in Athens. One, known as the Eleusinion, was somewhere below the Acropolis rock, perhaps in the neighbourhood of the Areopagus. Another stood near the Sacred Gate. It was probably from here that the procession started at the time of the Eleusinian festival. On the "mystic banks of the Ilissus," outside Athens, was a precinct dedicated to her where in "the flowering month," the end of February and the beginning of March, "the lesser mysteries" were celebrated.

These were a kind of preparation for the greater mysteries at Eleusis, and none but those who had been

initiated at the spring festival were allowed to share in the solemnities of the September gathering (see p. 317). In these mysteries Dionysus shared hardly less than Demeter, and it was his image that was carried in solemn procession along the Sacred Way to Eleusis at the later festival.

Like Dionysus, Demeter is ostensibly a kindly deity, the patroness of the fruitful earth and the sweet reward of the husbandman's toil ; and, like Dionysus, she has also a relentless aspect. This is shown in the legend of her mourning for Persephone. The world is held famine-stricken in the frozen hand of grief, while she walks up and down the land searching for her vanished daughter. At last she comes to Hecate, the mistress of dark lore, who had heard the cry of Persephone when Plutus and his dark horses approached her as she was gathering flowers in a spring meadow, and carried her off to the underworld. Demeter's wrath and grief are unappeasable ; she refuses to allow the plants to bear fruit, and the whole race of men seem about to die of famine, when the Olympians intervene and Plutus is obliged to yield Persephone. The meeting between mother and daughter is one of the sweetest themes of poetry. But the face of the daughter has changed and Demeter reads the truth in her eyes. Persephone has eaten the pomegranate, mysterious fruit of the underworld, and Plutus holds her as part of his kingdom. To him, therefore, she returns once a year, while Demeter mourns for her and the trees shed their leaves. At the close of the winter months Persephone returns to the upper world, and "blossom by blossom the spring begins."

These, and such as these, are the legends which the Athenians told to their children, as they were climbing the steep ascent to the Propylæa ; as they were watching the chorus on the dancing-ground of Dionysus, or as they trod the Sacred Way to Eleusis ; a world of

memories, half believed in, wholly loved, to which Athenians looked back with wistful longing through the hardships of the Peloponnesian War, through the disappointments of the Sicilian expedition, and the gradual loss of political supremacy and military prestige.

CHAPTER IV

PROMISE

I

ATHENS BEFORE THE PERSIAN WARS

ON the summit of the Acropolis, between the Parthenon and the Erechtheum, there are low rock walls much blurred by time, but still giving recognizable indication of a long, rectangular building. In modern plans of the Acropolis this is clearly marked and is sometimes described as the *Hekatompedon* or Hundred-Foot Temple. There seems little doubt that these inconspicuous remains mark the earliest temple to Athena on the Acropolis. On the same spot still earlier masonry has been found—two stone column bases and fragments of prehistoric walling. Slight enough in themselves, these remains seem to indicate that beneath the temple there was once a living-house with a central hall resembling those at Tiryns and Mycenæ. It is exciting enough to be told that here is the original house of Erechtheus, a palace of sufficient antiquity for the Athenians to believe that Athena herself lived here. At any rate the site was dedicated to her from earliest times so it was natural that this spot should be chosen for her first temple.

I had often tried to picture to myself what the Acropolis hill-top was like in those early days before the first Persian invasion, and it was in the Acropolis Museum that I came across the bit of sculpture that gave the thought an outline—a relief much broken but still showing temple, sacred precinct, olive-tree, and priestess. This missing link came to bridge the gulf between our first vision of the bare Acropolis rock, covered only with rude shrines, huddled dwellings, and the remains of cyclopean walls, and our later knowledge of the enlarged summit in all the glory of its marble temples.

The little temple in the relief is a box-like building. It is in the first primitive stone style recalling the old wooden construction. The triglyphs still look like beams and the pediment suggests a wooden gable. The roof is covered with tiles.

It helps to call up a picture of the Acropolis in the early days of the sixth century, giving life to the precise information collected by archæologists and historians, such as Dörpfeld and Judeich. Their researches have put the facts before us, but some imagination is necessary to shape the facts into a picture. Let us make the attempt. First there was the long, narrow crag, and, dark against the sky, the ragged outlines of the old cyclopean walls. At the western end, line behind line of masonry, was the famous nine-gated entrance (*Enneapylon*), a formidable approach to the fortress. For the Acropolis was a fortress; an impregnable stronghold of Church and State set in the midst of the town. The dwelling-houses, the tombs, even the palace of the early inhabitants had disappeared. The hill-top had lost its first residential character. The dwellings of the citizens were elsewhere. Such buildings as there were were for defence or for worship.

On the centre of the ridge was a solid-looking temple covered with stucco very fine and white, and

ornamented with deep touches of colour—dark blues and greens and a reddish brown. At the east end four detached columns and two pilasters supported the architrave, above which was the well-known frieze of alternate triglyph and metope supporting a triangular pediment filled with sculpture. The figures in the design show monstrous forms; one rears erect three human heads, blue-bearded, and of uncouth amiability. The narrow ends of the pediment were filled with their curling tails. The whole work is painted with gay colours over the rough stone. It is hard to believe that this plain and solid building is the forerunner of the great marble Parthenon, yet this was the first temple of Athena. Here was kept her old wooden image to which every four years the city in procession brought the garment woven by the flower of its maidenhood, the same procession that was recorded on the frieze of the later Parthenon. The old temple measured one hundred Attic feet from east to west, and in the main room of the Parthenon the same length measurement was carefully preserved. The temple was double, with a chamber east and west, and the Parthenon also preserved the same character. The simplicity and honesty of this early Doric architecture was full of promise. In less than a century it blossomed into full grace and dignity. The proportions were enlarged and corrected, so that what was here mere heaviness developed into easy strength. Marble took the place of limestone, and in more beautiful material the sculptured ornament became a triumph of art. Even before the discovery of the marble in Pentelicus there had been steady progress. Peisistratus made the first step towards improvement by changing the old pediment sculptures for newer ones, and he also added a limestone colonnade which lightened the squat appearance of the temple. We look indulgently at any reconstruction of old Hekatompedon, because it shows the “man’s thought

dark in the infant's brain " and has hints of beauty to be. Yet to those who built it this temple was in itself a thing of beauty, a triumph of architecture, a notable advance on all that had gone before. The flavour of sanctity gave it mysterious awe, since it stood on the site of that first Mycenæan house where Athena dwelt with Erechtheus. When the temple was built the position was somewhat reversed, and instead of Athena being the guest of Erechtheus, it was Erechtheus who seemed to be the guest of Athena. But the old serpent-king of the Acropolis was not forgotten. There were sacred serpents dwelling in the precinct, and the curling tails of the sculptured pediments seem more connected with his worship than with that of Athena. Outside the temple there may still be seen a stone altar of Ge, the earth-mother, who confided the child Erichthoneus to the care of Athena.

To complete the picture, to the north of the temple there must be imagined a level piece of the hill fenced in around a gnarled old olive-tree whose roots twisted serpent-like into the ground; near by was a bare rock showing three holes in an irregular row about one foot apart; a rocky pool beside it was filled with stagnant, black water. These were the three mysterious emblems that gave sanctity to the Acropolis: the olive of Athena, the trident-mark of Poseidon, and the salt spring that moans in sympathy with the storm-tossed sea (see p. 137). Beside the temple and sacred precinct there were at this date few other buildings on the Acropolis; some smaller temples, perhaps; a shrine to Artemis; an altar to the earth-mother; some archaic statues, and a few capitals bearing votive offerings. The top of the hill slopes so much that there was indeed little place for other buildings. I fancy that at this time it was not all barren rock. We hear later of a flower that grew freely here, the flower with which Athena, Giver of Health, healed the workman who fell from the Propylæa,

and may there not have been other olives as well as that hoary, old tree of Athena? After all, it is but a picture of fancy that we are painting. Let us think of the old Hekatompedon standing against a background of green, with the bare rock showing in places through the carpet of grass and flowers, a rocky footpath leading from one shrine to another, and in front of each an open space where the white-robed priest offered sacrifice.

A deep gully divides the Acropolis from the rocky heights to the west. This was excavated by Dr. Dörpfeld, who laid bare the crowding houses and narrow ways of the sixth-century town. The streets are crooked and the houses small. There was no town-planning here, no master-mind to direct the growth of the settlement whose inhabitants clustered round the Acropolis like bees around their hive, ready at any moment to seek refuge in their fortress. At first the early settlers seem hardly to have dared to quit the Rock. When it was no longer possible for them to live within the Acropolis walls they cut the foundations of their homes back into the very wall of the cliff and remained perched on its barren ledges.

A road wound down from the Areopagus into the valley below. The ancient city is here lost beneath the modern houses, but its lines are fairly known. A paved, open space marked the market-place, widening to a circle known as the orchestra or dancing-ground. Beyond this the space was prolonged and ran irregularly northwards towards a substantial group of houses at the farther end of the city. This is the Ceramicus, or potters' quarter. It was the fine white clay of this district that lured the Athenian potters at an early date from their inconvenient homes at the foot of the Acropolis, and here (since one trade follows another) the commercial centre of the city grew up. The straggling market-place that connects the potters' quarter with the buildings at the

foot of the hill gradually acquired a double character. At the potters' end it was the market of commerce. At the other end, beneath the Areopagus, political news and gossip of State affairs were the commodities exchanged. Throughout this century the potters' business became increasingly important. The vases from Attica, with their glossy black figures and ruddy ground, found a market in Sicily, in Italy, in Asia Minor, and throughout the islands of the Mediterranean.

Sixth-century Athens must have been a grey little town, with narrow streets and roofs of warm tiles. It lay beneath the Acropolis and stretched away unevenly to the north. The finest buildings were those near the hill. Here was a grey circular building known as the Tholos, where the daily sacrifices were offered. Beside it was the Prytaneum, with a thin wisp of smoke curling from it in token that the sacred fire still burnt in this the great public hearth of Athens. Here the officials lived and had their public meals. We may imagine it perhaps shaped like a dwelling-house, the hearth in the centre and the living-rooms opening from it. The new buildings of Peisistratus rose among their more venerable neighbours, conspicuous by their fresh stucco and bright paint. The small city would be all bustle and activity, a market town just blossoming into the new dignity of a capital. Around it, and merging in it without the barrier of intervening walls, came the cultivated fields and olive groves, a strip of deeper green ever marking the course of the three little rivers, Cephissus, Ilissus, and Eridanus. Away to the west lay barren salt marshes, with the sea beyond. To the south was the curving Phalerum Bay with its fringe of sand, and the long longships and fishing-boats drawn up on the beach. Phalerum itself would be half obscured by the rounded hill of Munychia, already crowned by a fortress and scarred with quarries. On the other side of Munychia, like a blue inland lake, shone the

harbour of the Piræus ; only a fringe of small houses and a few craft in the haven then marked the spot where Themistocles later created his second Athens.

So much for the seaward view ; and away inland was the crown of hills, not barren and stony as to-day, but covered with deep woods, the haunt of wolf, and bear, and boar, and rich in birds and small game. The forests then came well down on to the plain and merged into the olive groves and cultivated lands, as these merged into the tracts of rock, scrub and marsh that fringed the shore. Here, as in a map, the Attica of the sixth century revealed the secret of her political condition with that eternal division between the party of the plain (rich and populous), the party of the coast (struggling and ambitious), and the party of the hills (poor and discontented). This is the landscape of Attica tinted to a sixth-century atmosphere.

And now to make the picture complete, let us look at that procession of peasants moving slowly down from the mountain-side and approaching the city from the east. In the front is a chariot drawn by white horses, and on it stands a strapping peasant-girl, clad in long scarlet robes, with a brazen helmet on her head, a long spear in her hand, and the golden ægis of Athena on her breast. Beside her sits a lean and bearded man in full armour. The chariot jolts roughly as the horses pace along the broken road. The girl steadies herself on her spear and keeps her head erect. But her eyes are wide with fright, her lips parted. From time to time the man at her side mutters an encouraging word. There are peasants marching beside the car and waving boughs of olive which they have snapped in passing through the groves. They have come far and are breathless, hoarse with shouting and singing, and parched with the dusty highway. As they near the town they push the garlands back from their brows, swing their sticks, and

break out once more into a joyful chant. The townsfolk come running out to meet them ; their astonishment turns to delight or disdain as they hurry back to tell the news. Before the city is reached a joyful crowd pushes along the road to meet the peasant waggon. They are all in holiday attire, shouting and singing, and taking up the refrain of the peasants. "Athena ! Athena !" they shout. "Athena comes to visit her city !" And then another cry is raised, "Hail to the ruler beloved of the goddess !" In this manner Peisistratus returned from his first exile.

A hoax ? a miracle play ? a drama ? What does it all mean ? After-generations have often discussed that strange outburst of enthusiasm. Where did credulity end and docility begin ? Out of all that shouting crowd, was there one who scanned the peasant girl Phye with really religious awe ; or was it all a matter for throwing caps in the air and taking a show good-humouredly ?

I have chosen it as a typical picture of this old pre-Persian Athens. In the first place we have the impetuous life of the young, growing nation ; childlike still and with a simplicity that was the germ of greatness ; receptive rather than critical, emotional, pleasure-loving, and sensitive to any new impression ; ready to run with the crowd and shout for the tyrant to-day, as to-morrow they will be ready to run and shout for the tyrannicides ; but above all things full of that surging life and energy that makes them throw their hearts into every enterprise. This is the material which, tempered by adversity and taught by experience, will make the fine steel of the fifth-century Athenian.

And on the other hand there is the figure of Peisistratus, the strong man who gave an interval of peace to the faction-haunted city. He was the benevolent tyrant who patronized the arts ; who made his court a resort of the sculptors and poets of other lands ; who

encouraged commercial intercourse, and turned the minds of the Athenians from their own petty parochial concerns to the wider culture of Asia Minor and the Ægean. This was the age of tyranny; state after state in the Greek world had been forced to learn that the one cure for their internal quarrels lay in the temporary surrender of their liberty. Athens was not peculiar in her political conditions, but she was peculiar in the good fortune that gave her Peisistratus as tyrant. Indeed, accepting Aristotle's definition of tyrant as one who rules for his own good rather than for the good of the state, it is difficult to bring the rule of Peisistratus under the head of tyranny. Plutarch gives a pleasant picture of the relations between Peisistratus and Solon, the great law-giver who saw his reforms suddenly endangered by a *coup d'état*. He alone had been clear-eyed enough to see the trend of politics, and when the crisis came he was the only one with sufficient courage to defy the tyrant. But for all that the friendship between them was unimpaired, and Solon stands to Peisistratus somewhat as Samuel stood to Saul in those days a few centuries earlier, when the Jewish nation had also given itself over to a tyranny.

The progress made in every art during this period is amazing. Tradition asserts that it was at the court of Peisistratus that the cycle of Homeric poetry was for the first time collected and written down. Whether this is actually the case or not, the legend is in itself a tribute to his reputation as an art patron, and befits the picture of his court as a centre for artists of widely differing spheres. Nor was this kind of art patronage mere self-glorification. It needed an outlook in advance of his day to encourage his court poets to work at a subject such as the Siege of Troy, in which Athens and men of Attica played an inconspicuous part. As Professor Bury truly says, an Eastern monarch would have set

them to immortalize his own exploits; and in this matter, as much as in anything else, Peisistratus showed the wideness of his view.

In the plastic arts the heavy limestone carving was gradually discarded. The sculptor began to use marble, and, however far from beauty the result, he had at any rate the satisfaction of finding that it need no longer be covered with paint to hide the blemishes and irregularities of its surface. Before very long this art of marble-cutting was carried further, and the veined, translucent stone was made to acknowledge a subtle relationship with veined and glowing flesh.

The parallel between Florence under the Medici and Athens under the Peisistratidæ often suggests itself. In the Archaic Rooms of the Athenian museums the sculptors are seen struggling with the same problems that beset the resurrection of art in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries of our era. In both cases there was a double difficulty to contend with: the limitations imposed by the material and those imposed by custom and by religious associations. There is, however, one great difference. The Italian sculptors had specimens of the best Greek work before them, while the Attic sculptors were drawing their inspiration from Ionian models only slightly in advance of their own achievements. Where the Greek had advantage over the Italian was in the life he saw around him. No doubt it was long before nude models were posed, but there were nude slaves in his own workshop. He could go to the gymnasium or to the palæstra, and could watch the vigorous play of muscles as the naked wrestlers gripped each other; could study the slow grace of the disc-thrower, the poise of the arm with the lance, the relaxed pause of the weary athlete. Here he had around him all day living statues with the sun playing on the modelling of the flesh, and revealing subtleties of anatomy that sent him back to his work

with a cry to Athena to endue his chisel with new skill.

This was the age when the athletic contests became famous. In the great games of Olympia, of Corinth, and of Athens, all freeborn Greeks were allowed to compete. A legitimate outlet was thus given to the competitive instincts of the race, and local patriotism no longer led of necessity to broken heads. Perhaps Peisistratus was wise enough to perceive the drift of the age, and it was as a statesman no less than as a sportsman that he showed honour to the victors of the games. His own horses competed in the chariot races; Herodotus even thinks it credible that Peisistratus permitted the owner of the winning team at Olympia to have his sentence of banishment reversed on the condition that he on his part should allow Peisistratus to claim the victory. With a ruler who threw himself so enthusiastically into their pastimes it is little wonder that the pleasure-loving side of the Athenians was developed.

The Athenians learned to enjoy painting, sculpture and music. They also learned to consider dancing as an art as well as a religious exercise. And here we come to one of the most interesting features of the period—the religious revival connected with the worship of Dionysus and its effect upon dramatic art. Before the days of Peisistratus the god from Thrace was acknowledged and worshipped in Athens. He had three festivals in the year: in December the Rural Dionysia, in January the “feast of the wine-press,” in February the “feast of blossoming.” But it is not until the latter part of the sixth century that he takes a prominent place among the Athenian divinities, and the development of his worship must be attributed to Peisistratus. There was one orchestra or dancing-ground in the market-place, and another in front of the little limestone temple where afterwards stood the great Dionysiac theatre. There has also been discovered

another precinct of Dionysus on the western slope of the hill, and it seems evident that about this period he became one of the most popular divinities in Athens. One may perhaps suggest that Peisistratus himself was too good an actor not to enjoy the dramatic interest of the Dionysiac choruses. His simulated wound shown in the Agora, his entrance into the town led by the goddess Athena, the ruse that led to the taking of Nisæa, all these must have needed careful stage management, and reveal him (like many another politician) as an actor *manqué*. It was he who instituted a fourth great annual festival in honour of Dionysus—the Dionysia of the city. It celebrated the resurrection of the god of the vine after his long winter sleep, and took place in the end of March and beginning of April, when little is needed to set any southerner dancing in tune to the triumph of Nature. A feast at this time of the year seems not only natural but inevitable; the Athenians had perhaps from time immemorial been wont to celebrate the coming of spring in a sacred dance. It was in these days that the story element was introduced and the dance turned to drama.

Any one who has lived in Attica knows how the first mild days and soft rains can throw a veil of green over the brown hill-sides, while a million plants are drawn out of the earth and the almond-trees become sheeted with blossom; any one who has seen these things knows the advent of spring concentrated into a three days' miracle and ceases to wonder that the ancient Athenians gave themselves over to a religious ecstasy that was indeed the intoxication of delight. The worship of Dionysus is associated with rapture, with feelings that pass the bounds of speech and express themselves in motion. This is why it is associated with the dancing-ground, why the dance is in essence religious, and why the whole story of the development of the drama is bound up with

that little limestone temple of Dionysus under the Acropolis hill. It will be interesting to consider these questions more in detail when we come to stand in the magnificent marble-seated theatre of the fourth century. For the moment it is enough to note that the dramatic art, no less than the arts of poetry and sculpture, must trace the time of its flowering to the genial atmosphere of the tyrants.

Within view of the dancing-ground, though at some distance away from it, Peisistratus began to build a temple to Olympian Zeus. This he never finished, but the site was well chosen. The broad platform overlooking the Ilissus was probably in those days a well-wooded solitude. Hadrian could not better the choice of Peisistratus when he came to select a spot for his magnificent temple. Away across the river the Lyceum, a famed gymnasium, was half hidden by its groves of trees.

To complete the list of all that Athens owes to her tyrants two more works must be added, practical benefits which perhaps outweighed in value all the rest: a good water supply and good roads. An aqueduct now brought water from the upper Ilissus, and the town, formerly dependent on brackish wells and uncertain rivers, had a fine public fountain with water gushing from nine generous lion-mouths.

Instead of the stony tracks leading from the mountains, hard to find and rough to follow, Peisistratus or his sons gave Attica well-laid roads, marked with mile-stones and leading to the altar of the Twelve Gods in the Agora, which became thus as it were the Hyde Park Corner of Athens.

In short, that which was at the coming of Peisistratus a mere country town, is found at the end of his family's reign a small capital, with temples, theatre, gymnasium, fountains, roads, and everything essential to the well-being of city life.

The Athenians changed even more than their city. Instead of the factious crowd of countrymen, rude in speech and limited in idea, a gay polyglot throng filled the market-place. The simple Attic dress with its woollen or leather tunic was exchanged for the longer, more effeminate and more elaborate Ionic dress of linen : golden clasps and cunningly woven borders were popular at festivals. For active life men still kept to the short tunic that left their limbs free, and the athletes at their exercises wore nothing but a girdle—but for city life a more luxurious style was becoming common, and even Solon's sumptuary laws could not stem the tide of fashion. "The Athenians," says Thucydides, "were the first who laid aside arms and adopted an easier and more luxurious way of life. Quite recently the old-fashioned refinement of dress still lingered among the elder men of the richer class, who wore undergarments of linen, and bound back their hair in a knot with golden clasps in the form of grasshoppers." What a beguiling fashion that must have been ! No wonder the old men clung to it in spite of changing modes, even as they clung to their becoming wigs in the early days of the nineteenth century.

II

IN THE NATIONAL MUSEUM

In modern Athens there are still four places where it is possible to breathe the atmosphere of those far-away days before the city was destroyed by the Persians. The first is in the Archaic Rooms of the National Museum, another is in the museum on the Acropolis, the third is on the Pnyx hill, and the fourth on the Areopagus.

The National Museum in Athens stands at the town

end of that long road leading out to the Patissia suburb. This Patissia Road is one of the new boulevards that have gained for Athens the name of "*le petit Paris*. High white houses with brightly coloured *jalousie* blinds stand on either side of a broad street where young trees are planted. Down the middle of the road there rattle with much horn-blowing a little electric tram. On the pavements are the nursery parties of the suburb: nurses in high Russian head-dresses and silver chains; nurses with gigantic gay caps of frilled ribbon; nurses in large white aprons, stout nurses, thin nurses, lean nurses, brawny nurses (but mostly stout); and beside them the children, little dark-eyed monkeys in tartan dresses with ribbon sashes; a few perambulators, and many babies carried on the arm, their embroidered robes reaching to the hem of the nurses' skirts. On a sunny day these parties all saunter along the pavement, sooner or later to drift into the pleasant shade of the museum garden, the only playground at this end of the town. There the children romp among the shrubs of oleander and arbutus and lean over the circular stone basins of the two ponds where the goldfish lurk.

At the further end of the garden there rises a white colonnade, shadowing a terrace of venetian red, in front of a large white building. A decorative row of orange trees stands before the terrace like a guard of honour. This is the National Museum, a pleasant refuge on a hot day. Here are shaded rooms, marble floors, and silent sleepy guardians in long blue cassocks, with the freshness of that large garden between the museum and the dusty street. The coolest thing that I know on a hot day is to turn into the rooms of archaic sculpture, and to spend a morning among these stone Apollos, gazing oneself back into the earliest twilight of Greek art.

After the precocious brilliance of Crete and Mycenae night seems to settle over the Mediterranean world. The

old culture is wiped out, the old traditions forgotten. The builder has lost the secret of architecture; the painter decorates his vase with angular scratches.

The few records that remain of this dark period are stored in the Prehistoric Room—a small gallery leading out of the big hall which is devoted to the Mycenæan treasures. A brief visit to the Prehistoric Room is enough to indicate how completely the Mycenæan civilization had vanished. Here remains of the Pre-Mycenæan periods herd together as if that glorious interlude had never been.

The gulf between these prehistoric scraps and the period of full-blown Greek art is bridged by the objects shown in what are known as the Archaic Rooms. Return to the entrance-hall, turn into the room on your right and you have before you a scheme of sculpture illustrating the growth of that art from the first rude stone images up to the mature beauty of the bronze Hermes.

There is something repellent and yet mesmeric in this phalanx of stone figures with staring eyes, wide-smiling lips, and rigid limbs. They are a strange company gathered from different parts of the Greek world and dating from the eighth to the sixth century B.C. Arranged in a roughly chronological order the earliest works are for the most part nearest the entrance.

In the centre of the large Archaic Room stands an impressive figure lately found at Sunium. It is a stone colossus, 15 feet high, the figure of a man with a right leg slightly advanced. The limbs are heavy and lumpish; the eyes monstrous and protruding; the corners of the closed lips turned up in a deprecating smile. The ears are treated as a mere spiral ornament. The hair is arranged in neat curls. There may have been something impressive in his aspect to the sailors who rounded the bay and caught sight of him standing in the open air on that fine rocky headland at Sunium. But as

he is now, imprisoned in a grey museum and surrounded by others of the same type, he becomes a very nightmare of amiable uncouthness. His main significance lies in his strong Egyptian savour. He shows clearly enough one quarter to which the callow Ægean sculptor naturally turned for inspiration.

In the same room are other figures of much the same aspect. They are all known as "Apollons," and it is likely enough that some of them stood for an aspect of the deity, though others were but representations of human athletes. At first they seem to be nothing more than stone reproductions of the old sacred images of wood. There is something flat and angular in the treatment of the stone; the figure recalls the flat board or trunk of the tree out of which such statues were first made. It is only by slow degrees that changes are introduced in attitude or anatomy. First the distinction of sex is indicated, then a knee or ear is studied, an arm is raised, or the bony framework of the torso is suggested.

In the same room another stage of progress is indicated in the statuette of the Flying Victory found at Delos and long known as the Victory of Archermus. Here the artist grapples with a new set of problems. No longer content with the search after an easier and more lifelike attitude, he now goes further and tries to represent movement.

The figure of the Flying Victory is reproduced on Plate 5*a*. At first it seems simply ludicrous. The lower half of the body turns to the right: in trying to suggest the movement of the limbs in flight, the artist has only conveyed the idea that the goddess is dropping on one knee. This attitude was also adopted to represent running figures. Compare this Victory with the helmeted Runner reproduced on the same plate, Fig. 6. There are remains of large wings behind the Victory's



A



E



C



D

ARCHAIC SCULPTURE

a. FLYING VICTORY
c. TOMBSTONE OF ARISTON

b. HELMETED RUNNER
d. ACROPOLIS MAIDEN

shoulders, small wings in front of them, and wings on her ankles. If he could not quite make her fly, her creator supplied her handsomely with wings. The upper half of the body and the head are not like the legs in profile, but are turned to the front. This gives the statue a queer twist. The broad, smiling mouth and wide eyes seemed turned to the spectator as though demanding sympathy for some huge joke. Does she really expect to be taken seriously? It is hard at first to realize that this is one of the great statues of antiquity: that for generations it was worshipped as divine, and that in modern days it has been studied and discussed as much as any work of art. The question of authorship alone has filled many articles in archæological journals. It is now questioned whether the statue has any connection with the pedestal bearing the names of Archermus and Mikkiades of Chios, on which it once rested, yet it is still accepted as a work of that Chian school which in the seventh century was known as foremost among marble-workers. To contemporaries this statue seemed a miracle of art. There is certainly some suggestion of motion. The cloak is blown back from the goddess's shoulders and the drapery from her limbs, so that the form of the thigh is suggested under the clinging folds. This effect of clinging drapery, and the traces of wings on the shoulders, give this figure the right to be considered as a distant ancestress of that most beautiful statue of the fourth century, the Victory of Samothrace. Perhaps without this crude attempt that other Victory would not have been achieved. Certainly the conception of this little archaic figure shows thought and poetry far in advance of its execution.

The Apollo from Sunium and the Nike of Archermus are typical of this early art where beauty is only relative, precious only by contrast with what has been, or as a

foretaste of what is to be. In the next rooms the sculpture already explains itself. Here there is the same combination of gracious simplicity and formal reserve that give their charm to the pictures of the early Italian Renaissance. The bas-relief that shows Triptolemus receiving the ears of corn has a dignity of gesture, a sentiment indicated by pose rather than expressed by feature, which recall the historical frescoes of Giotto. Beside Triptolemus on either side stand Demeter and Persephone.

The funeral monument of Aristion is an arresting bit of characterization (Plate 5c). The sharp features, bare muscular limbs, and alert expression, stamp themselves on the memory, so that when one tries to picture Athens of the sixth century the town of our imagination seems peopled with a race of hardy, intelligent soldiers such as this. Less ambitious than the Flying Victory, it is infinitely more pleasing, and the style is marked by a reserve that already tells of power. Of later date than the Victory, and of Attic workmanship, it brings the history of sculpture a full step nearer to Pheidias. It has besides a kind of historical interest, for this Aristion may well be the very man of that name who is mentioned in Plutarch as the friend of Peisistratus. The story runs thus :—

“Solon, privately conferring with the heads of the factions, endeavoured to compose the differences. Peisistratus appeared the most tractable, for he was extremely smooth and engaging in his language, a great friend to the poor, and moderate in his resentments, and what Nature had not given him he had the skill to imitate ; so that he was trusted more than the others, being accounted a prudent and orderly man, one that loved equality and would be an enemy to any that moved against the present settlement. Thus he deceived the majority of the people, but Solon quickly discovered his character, and found

out his design before any one else ; yet did not hate him upon this, but endeavoured to humble him and bring him off from his ambition, and often told him and others that if any one could banish the design of pre-eminence from his mind and cure him of his desire of absolute power, none would make a more virtuous man or more excellent citizen. Now when Peisistratus, having wounded himself, was brought into the market-place in a chariot and stirred up the people as if he had been thus treated by his opponents because of his political conduct, and a great many were enraged and cried out, Solon, coming close to him, said, 'This, O son of Hippocrates, is a bad copy of Homer's Ulysses ; you do to trick your countrymen what he did to deceive his enemies.' After this the people were eager to protect Peisistratus, and met in an assembly, where one Aristion making a motion that they should allow Peisistratus fifty clubmen for a guard to his person, Solon opposed it. . . .

"And the people, having passed the law, were not nice with Peisistratus about the number of his clubmen, but took no notice of it, though he enlisted and kept as many as he would until he seized the Acropolis. When that was done and the city in an uproar, Megacles with all his family at once fled ; but Solon, though he was very old and had none to back him, yet came into the market-place and made a speech to the citizens, partly blaming their inadvertency and meanness of spirit, and in part urging and exhorting them not thus tamely to lose their liberty ; and likewise then spoke that memorable saying that before it was easier to stop the rising tyranny, but now the greater and more glorious action to destroy it when it was begun already and had gathered strength. But all being afraid to side with him, he returned home, and taking his arms, he brought them out and laid them in the porch before his door, with these words, 'I have done my part to maintain my

country and my laws,' and then he busied himself no more."

III

IN THE ACROPOLIS MUSEUM

A museum on the Acropolis sounds almost like desecration, yet I have never heard any one wish the present modest building away. It is sunk beneath the level of the ground and its roof is hardly visible. Here are gathered together all the treasures discovered by the Greek Archæological Society when excavating on the Acropolis (1884-90). The collection is homogeneous. It has a unity of time as well as of place. The objects all date from before the great destruction of the Acropolis by the Persians in 480 B.C. They were mostly found under the level of the present Parthenon, the broken fragments having been roughly shovelled together to make a broad terrace on which the new temple should be built.

Herodotus tells the story of the national catastrophe that preceded the great rebuilding:—

"The Persians encamped upon the hill over against the citadel, which is called Mars Hill by the Athenians, and began the siege of the place, attacking the Greeks with arrows whereto pieces of lighted tow were attached, which they shot at the barricade. And now those who were within the citadel found themselves in a most woeful case, for their wooden rampart betrayed them; still, however, they continued to resist. It was in vain that the Peisistradæ came to them and offered terms of surrender—they stoutly refused all parley, and among other modes of defence rolled down huge masses of stone upon the barbarians as they were mounting up to the gates, so that Xerxes was for a long time very

greatly perplexed, and could not contrive any way to take them.

"At last, however, in the midst of these many difficulties, the barbarians made discovery of an access. For verily the oracle had spoken truth, and it was fated that the whole mainland of Attica should fall beneath the sway of the Persians. Right in front of the citadel, but behind the gates and the common ascent, where no watch was kept and no one would have thought it possible that any foot of man could climb, a few soldiers mounted from the sanctuary of Aglaurus, Cecrops' daughter, notwithstanding the steepness of the precipice. As soon as the Athenians saw them upon the summit, some threw themselves headlong from the wall and so perished, while others fled for refuge to the inner part of the temple. The Persians rushed to the gates and opened them, after which they massacred the suppliants. When all were slain they plundered the temple and every part of the citadel."

When the war was over and the victorious Athenians returned to the ruined Acropolis they found that the work of destruction was complete. With full confidence in themselves they gave up the idea of mere restoration and set to work to create other and more beautiful statues and temples to replace those that they had lost. The débris of the old buildings and statues was used as worthy foundations to level up the narrow gable of the hill-top, till it widened to a broad platform on which the new buildings could be planted. It is almost as though the Athenians were glad to be rid of the old works of art, which already jarred on their taste and were yet too sacred to have been intentionally set aside. Once displaced, they might be discarded. In any case they had proved their inability to protect the national shrines and the suppliants in the temple.

In many of our modern towns the Persians might

also prove a wholesome scourge. "Make a clean sweep and begin again," is an inspiring programme to a nation serene in its self-confidence, and this was evidently the motto on which the fifth-century Athenians acted. They wanted no museum for their discarded divinities. They simply buried them where they lay.

Thus it came to pass that when, in our own day, the top of the Acropolis hill was thoroughly excavated there was found a rich deposit, dating from before the Persian War, and mostly from the century immediately preceding it. Many of these fragments are in such excellent preservation that it is hard to believe they are unearthed from a rubbish-heap more than two thousand years old. Here are found the painted limestone sculptures that filled the pediments of the old Hekatompedon, and of some unknown neighbouring buildings. There is a brawny Hercules wrestling with a monster, and there is the three-headed Typhon whose curling tail diminishes as it recedes into the acute angle of the pediment. Another limestone group shows a struggle between a bull and two lions. The grim persistence with which the lion holds on to his prey, the strength in the down-pressed neck of the bull are almost Minoan in spirit.

Here also is a portion of the marble pediment of Peisistratus that replaced the limestone reptiles. It is much broken, but enough remains to show that it represented Athena slaying a giant—a vigorous piece of work; the attitude of the goddess belies her smile. As this group was in the place of honour over the central temple at the time of the Persian invasion, it no doubt met with the roughest treatment. It seems little less than a miracle that the gentle face of the goddess survived the fall of the temple she adorned.

The row of maidens or priestesses that were standing around the Hekatompedon had less far to fall and suffered less than the Athena. They are marble statues

showing the soft lines and rich decoration beloved by the Ionian sculptor, and therefore dating no doubt from the artistic revival under Peisistratus. The dress is most elaborate. How were these neat folds kept in place? The undergarment is drawn tightly round the figure. Over it an embroidered cloak is arranged in small perpendicular folds that usually seem to hang from a hidden band passed crosswise over the breast. Probably this style of statue drapery became something of an artistic convention and was never quite a faithful copy of Nature. Experiments have shown that it is impossible to reproduce these costumes line for line without cutting and sewing the material, whereas in the Attic and Doric styles of dress there is no line of drapery in stone that cannot be reproduced by pinned folds. The elaborate Ionic dress worn by these Acropolis maidens was in vogue in Athens throughout the latter half of the sixth century and corresponds with the fashion of more luxurious dress for men mentioned in a previous section (see p. 99). Herodotus has an amusing tale that it was introduced to punish the Athenian ladies for having stabbed an offender to death with their brooches, since this style of dress does not require the heavy shoulder-brooch of the Doric dress. This may or may not have been the case, but it is probable that it was also part of the general cult of Eastern fashion for which Peisistratus was in great measure responsible. The style was too artificial to become permanently popular, and in the next century both men and women in Athens adopted the simpler and more dignified Doric draperies.

These Acropolis maidens have some points of resemblance with the Flying Victory from Delos; being less ambitious, they are much more pleasing and certainly—there is no other word—more lady-like. I know no one who has haunted the Acropolis Museum without coming to feel the charm of these gentle “aunts”: well-dressed

and well-bred, something more than mortal and yet not quite divine. We can picture them on that day when the rough Persian soldiery poured up the hill. They stood in line outside the temple awaiting their fate with serene dignity, much as the statue-like senators of Rome awaited the Goths who stormed their Capitol. After twenty-two centuries of burial the dresses of these priestesses still keep their gay borders and their faces that demure, downcast smile (Plate 5*d*).

The last time I visited the Acropolis Museum I found so many new acquaintances among the old friends there that it almost seemed as if there might have been new excavations. But the Acropolis holds no more for the excavator. The additions are due to scholars who have been building up new statues out of old fragments. The illustrated catalogue also helps one to new discoveries. The archaic animal groups are the most impressive of the restorations. In addition to the old fragmentary pediment of lion and bull there is now a companion group showing a lioness tearing a calf. In the first group, though the lion was obviously master, one felt that the bull had made a good fight. This new pediment is more cruel. The calf is completely crumpled up under the huge lioness, a creature made more terrifying by the touches of bright paint. Notice her red eye with blue eyeball and long, tearing claws. The calf has never had a chance.

This marble greyhound with gentle head and intent eye has gained by the recovery of his nose. And here are two archaic riders, their noble horses pacing forward with arched necks and well-raised feet. One horse has a blue mane, one a red. The body of one rider and the hands of both are missing. Were their wrists too weak to hold their steeds without that torturing bit indicated, though the metal bridles are missing, by the raised head and open mouth of the horse? It is classical models

such as these that have given Art the conception of the horse as an animal that holds his head high and froths at the mouth. A study of the bits used in antiquity explains the device by which this effect was obtained, and the bridles of the modern Greek are often hardly less cruel.

Most beautiful among the animal studies is this delicately outlined flight of birds: great winged eagles and storks in alternate panels, which were ranged under the eaves of the old temple of Athena.

IV

DEMOCRATS AND ARISTOCRATS

Of the actual remains of pre-Persian Athens little is now to be seen except that which has found a place in the museums.

The foundations of the old Hekatompedon on the Acropolis need to be interpreted by an expert. The columns of the new colonnade which Peisistratus set around it are now mere fragments built into the north wall of the Acropolis. The Prytaneum, the Tholos, the Bouleuterium, the Orchestra in the Agora, the Lyceum, have vanished, leaving no trace. The Areopagus shows no more than a flight of rock-cut steps, a level floor, and two stone benches. The Pnyx is the most satisfactory building that remains of this age. Here the retaining wall^{*} rises to a conspicuous height, and here are the stone platform from which the orators addressed the people and the altar (also of stone) on which sacrifices were offered. From here also there is a memorable view of the Acropolis, which gathers itself together, a massive pillar of light and shade against the flat, grey background

^{*} But recent excavations have now shown this wall to be no earlier than the fourth century.

of Hymettus. On the very top of the Pnyx hill there are another altar and platform, the purpose of which is not very clear. Plutarch made much of the fancy that the double view from the Pnyx ridge represented the choice before the Athenian democracy. Should it face the sea and follow an imperial policy, devoting its attention to colonies and conquests oversea, or should it content itself with an interior, self-regarding "little Athens" policy? In point of fact the sea-view is not visible from either platform on the Pnyx. What matter? A dramatic gesture in the direction of the Piræus would enable an orator like Themistocles to make his point with proper effect whether the sea were visible or not.

In the first days of the Athenian Assembly the Pnyx hill-side had perhaps a natural slope from the altar and rock platform down to the valley in which lay the old town of Athens. Then, as the audience grew, it became impossible for those at the foot of the hill either to see or hear what occurred on the summit. In order to remedy this a massive circular retaining wall was built, and inside it the ground was banked up, giving the hill-top the character of an irregular theatre. As in a theatre, the audience were now circled above instead of below the orator, their backs to the town, their faces towards the sea.

This retaining wall is still an impressive sight as one turns from the carriage-road in the Acropolis valley. The rocky path that leads to the summit passes under these blocks, some of which measure as much as 13 feet by 6 feet. It seems to follow the original path used by the citizens of ancient Athens, for the rocks are worn smooth with use.

The democracy continued to grow as democracies will, and by the middle of the fourth century B.C. the Pnyx hill was deserted and the Assembly met in the great new theatre on the south side of the Acropolis.



ORATOR'S PLATFORM ON THE PNYX
WITH THE ACROPOLIS AND MOUNT HYMETTUS IN THE BACKGROUND

Standing on the breezy Pnyx and looking at the rock-cut platform, one tries to picture the actual working of a democracy that governed by mass meeting. No electing of delegates and representatives here. It is the whole body of citizens that decide the action of the State. See how they must be bullied and bribed into attendance. Look at that cord round the market-place to prevent trivial comings and goings on the day of the Assembly. Only the road to the Pnyx remains open, and along that road go the citizens, driven more ignominiously than schoolboys to a house-match or sheep to a fair.

The payment of a few obols makes up to the poor man for the loss of his day's wage. The rich man to whom the small bonus is of no value has perhaps his own policy to further or is ambitious to shine as an orator. Go they all must, willing or unwilling, or lose their privileges as Athenian citizens. The picture of Athenian democracy seems like a caricature of all democratic government. How could a mob thus collected decide questions of State policy? Home affairs must have been difficult enough to deal with in an Assembly where conflicting interests were personally represented; but what when it came to foreign policy? No room for fine diplomacy here. The Government of Athens bawled its intentions on the hill-top, and then wondered that its schemes were sometimes forestalled by its neighbours. Think, too, of the officials chosen by lot without question of their character and experience, so that a man might find himself harbour-master one year and another year, say, auditor of accounts; only the most important offices, such as the Ministry of War, being filled by officials rationally selected.

That the system met with even tolerable success is a glorious tribute to the intellect of the average Athenian citizen. It is true that there was power to discard any man flagrantly unsuited for office and also a system of

scrutiny and an account to be rendered at the expiration of office. Without these modifying circumstances the Athenian democracy could hardly have survived a generation. Even as it was it failed. It was here on the Pnyx that the pitiful blunders were made, resulting in the Sicilian expedition and the Peloponnesian War. But the deliberations on this hill-top also belong to the best age of Greek democracy, an age that was already passing when Pericles proudly claimed, "Athens is the school of Hellas, and the individual Athenian in his own person seems to have the power of adapting himself to the most varied forms of action with the utmost versatility and grace."

The picture of democracy on the Pnyx is not complete without its complement, the picture of aristocracy on the Areopagus, that hill-side opposite. A cynic has remarked that all the pilgrims who come to Athens may be divided into two classes—those who follow the footsteps of Paul and those who follow the footsteps of Pausanias. The latter spend many days visiting odd scraps of masonry, discussing the exact site of the nine-mouthed fountain, and finding their joy in the most obscure remains; the former drive straight to the Areopagus, and, having looked at Athens from this point of view, proceed to discuss the probable site of the altar to the Unknown God. Perhaps those days of undivided allegiance are over, but there is much to be said for the concentrated vision of the pilgrim. Indeed, it is a magnificent picture that this chapter in the Acts recalls—the picture of a little Jew standing on the little Areopagus and waving aside with one gesture of his hand the Parthenon, the Erechtheum, and all the accumulated tradition of splendour on that overshadowing hill.

"Know ye not that God dwelleth not in temples made with hands?" "Temples made with hands"—that is all he has to say of them. Truly a memorable moment in the

history of mankind ! And the pilgrims are right who come to Athens determined to make real for themselves at least this one great impression and not to concern themselves with doubts whether really Paul stood upon this crag called "Areopagus" or in the council-house of the same name below.

Perhaps the impression would not be lessened but deepened, if they gathered up the full harvest of associations suggested by this piece of rock, and then thought of all that the Areopagus suggested to the Athenians as well as of the little that it conveyed to Paul.

The Areopagus is connected in Greek legend with mysteries of defiance and retribution. It is the only rising ground within bowshot of the Acropolis. Therefore in early days it was the natural camp of any enemy attacking the citadel. Here the Amazons are supposed to have encamped in their war with Theseus. Here, later, the Persians stationed themselves, slinging fiery bolts against the wooden wall of the Acropolis (see p. 106).

But in the days of Athenian greatness the thought of the Areopagus as a post for the foe vanished from view, and instead came vaguer and even more gloomy associations. It was the Hill of Judgment and the Home of Retribution. Here Ares came to be judged after he had murdered his daughter's lover, and here in later days sat the old conservative aristocratic Court of the Areopagus, charged with the duty of clearing the State from blood-guiltiness. Its members were to judge between accused and accuser, as each solemnly stated his case standing by the stone allotted to him, and their task was also detective. They were to discover wrongdoers and for this end they were given power over the private life of the citizen, almost matching those of the Spanish Inquisitors or the Roman Censor. Yet Athens was grateful to them ; they stood between society and the dark powers of the underworld. As the duty of

the Inquisitors was to punish heresy and save men from the devil, so the Areopagus must see to the punishment of crime lest unavenged blood should call down the wrath of the Furies, or lest men should in secret depart from those sacred customs by which the State had grown strong. Early society is not liberal or progressive. It is intensely conservative, afraid to deviate from the familiar paths lest unknown terrors should befall.

Beneath the Areopagus rock is a chasm which became in time the home or prison of the Furies. In the early days of society they had not been thus confined to one spot but were found everywhere. Hard to appease, insatiable, vindictive, they sent madness and misfortune to the house of the murderer and would allow no crime to remain unavenged.

Primitive man suffered throughout from consciousness of guilt. It seemed to him that the whole community must be punished if the criminal were not made a scape-goat. Thus the Furies were represented as lynx-eyed. And since vengeance implies a series of infinite retaliation and the long tale of a blood-feud, the Furies were also shown to be thirsty and unappeasable. When in the natural course of social development the State assumed responsibility for punishment, the Court of the Areopagus gradually replaced the Furies, and its harsh justice was merciful after their black terror. It is easy therefore to see why the Furies had their dwelling in the chasm beneath the Areopagus. For centuries the city eyed their home uneasily. The legend that tells how they were changed from Erinyes, "Furies," to Eumenides, or "Kindly Ones," is a pleasant illustration of the genial rationalism with which the later Greek spirit mellowed the bitterness of its Dark Ages. The story is worked out by Æschylus in his play "The Eumenides." It shows Orestes tormented by the Furies

for the murder of his mother. It is true that he had killed her in order to avenge his father's death and that blood was already crying out for vengeance when, by Apollo's express command, he carried out the death sentence. The Furies take no heed to the justice of the cause; vengeance is their only cry. Orestes has slain his mother and blood must answer for blood. In despair Orestes appeals to Apollo. Apollo directs him to Athens. He must go to the hill of Ares and there lay his cause before Athena. Then comes the magnificent scene in which Apollo pleads for Orestes, the chorus of Furies reiterate their cry that a mother's murder cannot and must not remain unavenged.

In the end Athena institutes the Court of the Areopagus, the men of Athens are made judges of all cases of homicide. The Furies are given a home beside the rock and their name is changed. Athena sums up the matter thus:—

Hear now my statute, men of Athens, ye
Who try this case, the first of homicide,
And ever henceforth for the host of Ægeus
This Parliament of judges shall abide.
I dedicate yon hill (the seat and camp
Of Amazons when with ill-will to Theseus
They came in war and fenced that high-fenced town,
A new town 'gainst the old, and sacrificed
To Ares whence the rock and hill are named
The Areopagus) on which the people's Awe
And his brother Fear shall chase alike
By day and night wrongdoing; if the people
Themselves admit no changes in my laws.
I charge the people cherish and revere
Neither a lawless nor despotic form,
And not to cast all fear outside the State.
For who of mortals fearing naught is just?
If you do duly dread this awful Court,
Then you shall have a bulwark of the land
And city safeguard such as no man hath.

This speech plainly emphasizes the change from the era of private vengeance to the conception that the State is guardian of the laws. It is a change that must come sooner or later in every progressive society. The Greeks are peculiar in that they seem to have been so far advanced and so far self-conscious that they demanded some rational explanation of the change, and that the explanation came not from the priests but from the poets.

It is peculiar also to the Greek genius that some special spot should have been connected with the story. Legend and landscape seem wedded in the Greek mind. And in all the near neighbourhood of Athens there is perhaps no other place so suggestive of communication with the lower world as this upstanding rock with its abrupt edge and chasm.

As time went on the feelings of awe lessened. Cynicism and disillusion marked the generation that saw the end of the Peloponnesian War. The Court of the Areopagus was removed to a building in the neighbourhood of the Agora, and justice no longer needed the backing of tamed Furies. No doubt it was essential for the health of young Athens that the Court of the Areopagus should lose its vague terrors, and yet from a sentimental point of view I am attached to this group of gloomy old aristocrats and their dark alliance with the spirits of the underworld.

The Areopagus seems indeed to have been the chosen home of mystery. Somewhere in this same region the tomb of Œdipus, King of Thebes, was thought to be hidden. In the great trilogy of Sophocles Œdipus comes blind and exiled to Colonus. Theseus, King of Athens, comes to meet him and show him hospitality. In reply Œdipus says: "Son of Ægeus, I will unfold that which shall be a treasure for this thy city, such as age never can mar. Anon, unaided and with no hand to guide me,

I will show the way to the place where I must die. But that place reveal thou never unto mortal man ; tell not where it is hidden, nor in what region it lies, that so it may ever make for thee a defence, better than many shields, better than the succouring spear of neighbours. But for mysteries which speech may not profane thou shalt mark them for thyself, when thou comest to that place alone : since neither to any of this people can I utter them nor to mine own children, dear though they are. No, guard them thou alone ; and when thou art coming to the end of life disclose them to thy heir alone ; let him teach his heir : and so thenceforth." ¹

¹ I quote from a translation by the late Sir Richard Jebb. The translation of Æschylus on p. 117 is by A. Swanwick.

CHAPTER V

FULFILMENT: BUILDINGS ON THE ACROPOLIS

I

THE ENTRANCES

“**F**OR the works of Pericles . . . were perfectly made in so short a time and have continued so long a season. For every one of those which were finished at that time seemed to them to be very ancient touching the beauty thereof, and yet for the grace and continuance of the same it looketh at this day as if it were but newly done and finished ; there is such a certain kind of flourishing freshness in it, which telleth that the injury of time cannot impair the sight thereof. As if every one of those foresaid works had some living spirit in it to make it seem fresh and young and a soul that lived for ever which kept them in their good continuing state.”¹

So Plutarch writes of the impression left upon him by the beauties of the Acropolis, and the good old English of Sir Thomas North's translation fits his style well. Even when newly made this Propylæa and these temples seemed “very ancient touching the beauty thereof.” Plutarch saw here a beauty which is never new or old but eternal. And even in old age, even worn

¹ Plutarch, Pericles, xiii.

and broken as they are to-day, the stones still keep that "certain kind of flourishing freshness" which seems like a living spirit in the pure marble.

After reading eulogies like this passage from Plutarch, it is possible that when the moment comes for approaching them the eyes are shy of disappointment. But here before the portals of the Acropolis there is no need to hesitate. Go ahead boldly. Pray only for a clear sky and the reality will surpass all dreams.

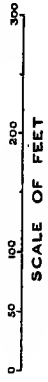
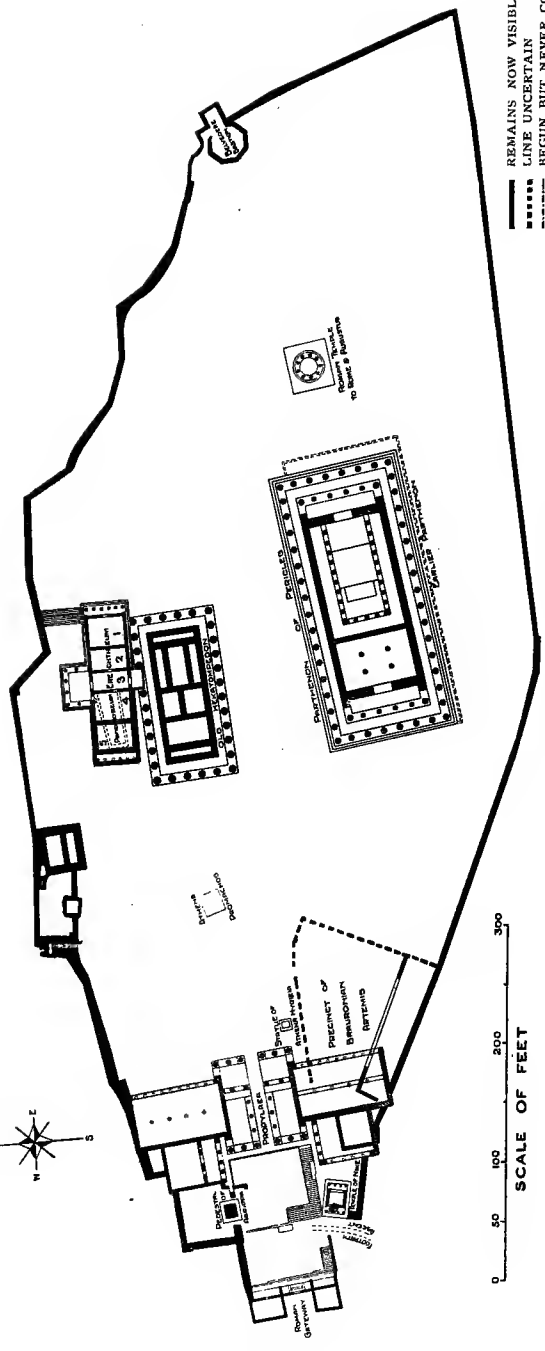
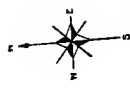
The fifth-century approach to the Acropolis was not the winding carriage-road, low gate, and steep steps that we know to-day. To set our feet on the way trodden by the worshippers of old we must leave the modern road where it passes the Theatre of Dionysus and must follow the footpath that winds up behind the Stoa of Eumenes and above the Odeum of Herodes. Here later buildings have obliterated the original path, but if we strike off above the Odeum and make a straight line for the gate in the iron railings under the outer bastion, our feet will be on rocks worn smooth by climbing multitudes. Passing through the gate—if by a happy chance we find it open—we must cross the marble stairs and step on to the natural rock beyond. This again is polished by use and cut into irregular slanting grooves. From this point the approach to the Propylæa seems to have been by a road that mounted in zig-zags, partly paved and partly cut in the rock. As the surface was worn dangerously smooth, grooves were cut to give foothold, not only to the people on foot, but also to the horsemen of the Panathenaic procession and to the oxen and goats driven up here for sacrifice. Inside the gates the same smooth rock and artificial grooving can be followed to the top of the plateau.

I like to be precise about this old rocky roadway to the Acropolis; otherwise with the modern staircase approach in our minds it is difficult to give proper dignity to the

picture of that great state procession winding up to the Parthenon. There is another picture that always occurs to me as I climb this rocky way—the picture of a little Athenian maid of ten, dressed in a saffron robe, holding tight by her mother's hand as they mount the path together. She is to play her part in that strange ceremony, the "bear-dance," which takes place in the sanctuary of Brauronian Artemis, just behind the Propylæa (see p. 79). Awed by the mysterious rites before her, comforted perhaps by the vision of a new yellow robe, I seem to see her with a face of wonder and worship such as Titian has shown in his figure of the Virgin, the solitary child climbing the steep steps of the temple at Jerusalem.

In Roman times the approach to the Propylæa was given a more pretentious aspect. A large statue of Agrippa, having a chariot and horses, was placed to face some turn in the winding path. Its pedestal is conspicuous enough to-day. Early in the first century the rocky way was replaced by marble steps, and the monument of Agrippa was left somewhat stranded, seeing that its position had been chosen with reference to the old path. The Roman love of pomp is here contrasted with the Greek sense of fitness. Pericles had been content that his Acropolis should be approached by the venerable foot-worn way until at one supreme moment the snowy portal of "the entrances" ushered the worshipper into the fairyland of marble within. By adding their steps and vile patchwork gateway the Romans gave prose for poetry.

The Propylæa of Pericles consisted of a series of buildings thrown right across the west front of the hill. In the centre was the high gateway pierced by five entrances and enriched with a deep columned porch both within and without. On either side of this wonderful entrance two marble halls were thrown forward like wings towards



- REMAINS NOW VISIBLE
- LINE UNCERTAIN
- BEGUN BUT NEVER COMPLETED
- PLANNED BUT NEVER BUILT

PLAN OF THE ACROPOLIS

the ascent. These halls had also porticoes so that a perspective of columns led the eye through the great openings unbarred by gates. The hall on the north side was considerably larger than that on the south ; and it was used as a picture-gallery. Opposite to it the little temple of Victory stood out on the end of the southern bastion, sending a welcome blot of shade across the steep, rocky road. On either side of the gateway the marble statue of a soldier on horseback faced the entrance.

The plan was therefore irregular enough. Had it not been for the southern bastion with its little temple, the great northern hall would have spoiled the symmetry of the whole by outreaching the southern building, and even as it is the eye is arrested by a sense of something unaccountable. Greek architecture is too logical to lend itself to caprice, and there is something more than capricious, almost whimsical, in this abrupt shortening of the southern wing. In point of fact, this irregularity is due to no architect's whim, but rather to the steady, relentless prejudice of the Athenian populace.

Pericles and his architect, Mnesicles, who planned these entrance buildings, seem at first to have contemplated a perfectly symmetrical arrangement in which the picture-gallery on the north would have been balanced by an exactly similar hall to the south ; and again these two outer buildings would have had their counterpart in two halls within the gates. The Propylæa would therefore have been in every way double : a double porch and double wings both within and without. This original plan was not relinquished until after the building had actually been begun, for technical details of the northern angle within the gate are treated as though they were to form part of an inner hall, and not as they eventually became, part of an outer wall. Why the original plan was abandoned on this north side

it is impossible to say. On the opposite side, however, it is plain enough that the inner hall was sacrificed because it would have encroached on the sanctuary of the Brauronian Artemis, while the outer hall had to be curtailed for fear of encroaching on the equally sacred ground of Athena, Giver of Victory. The architect found himself in the embarrassing position of having to create a spacious building especially intended to strike the eye by its dignity and breadth and to place it on a confined piece of ground where he was jostled by sacred sites that could not be disturbed. The work seems to have proceeded slowly, and there are signs that the Propylæa never received the last finishing touches. On the stones in the walls on the southern side of the ascent there are knobs that were left to enable the builders to lift these large blocks into their places and which, in the natural course of events, would have been chiselled away after they were in position. The marble of the walls and pavements is left without the final surface-smoothing, and the fluting on some of the columns is also incomplete.

But even though the entrance was not all that its creators had dreamed, it remained a great achievement even in that great age. There was nothing like it in any of the other cities of Greece. Approached from without, the snowy columns, ranged one behind the other, towered up into the clear sky; seen from within these same columns guarded the mauve and green of the landscape that swims below: "a portal opening into the unknown."

The Athenians were inordinately proud of this group of buildings. Their comedians laughed at them for "always belauding four things: their myrtle-berries, their honey, their Propylæa, and their figs." Epaminondas told the Thebans that the only way of humbling the Athenian spirit would be to "uproot the Propylæa and plant them before your own citadel."

II

THE PARTHENON

Through the Propylæa the well-worn rock slopes upwards to the west front of the Parthenon. This west end is but little damaged, and gives some idea of the vision that opened to the Athenian, who from the portico of the Propylæa saluted this new miracle of art.

It is perhaps impossible for us to understand all that the sight conveyed to him : only those who have travelled through the midnight of national disaster and issued into the dawn of the world's most glorious morning can tell the rapture with which the Athenians hailed the rebuilding of their great temple. The old Hekatompedon had been destroyed by the Persians, but even before this the building of a large new temple had been contemplated ; its limestone foundations may still be seen at the south-east corner of the present Parthenon. The new temple was to be of marble and was to stand on a wide platform. The débris of the old buildings was used to raise the southern slope of the Acropolis and a new wall was built to buttress up this artificial terrace. Here the work paused. When Ictinus, the architect of the new Parthenon, began his work a generation later, he found the site already prepared at great cost, and a quantity of masonry, columns, and drums that had been made ready for the first temple. These latter being out of date he discarded. The foundations he accepted, only modifying their proportions to suit the newer canons of art. The width was increased and its length diminished, so that length and width were now in the exact ratio of nine to four. The generation that built the Parthenon was the generation that remembered the discipline of

the last Persian invasion, but had grown to manhood under the genial influences of prosperity. Athens had been expanding year by year. She was now the mistress of an important confederacy of smaller states. She had constituted herself the banker of this alliance, and the treasure which before had been lodged at Delos was now transferred to Athens. She was rich in memory, rich in hope, and rich in this world's goods. She was rich also in spiritual energy and in an art freed from archaic formalism. In Pericles she had a statesman who was also an artist, and in Pheidias an artist who was also enough of a statesman to bring the work of an army of craftsmen into one harmonious whole. The walls of Troy were built by song; the temple of Athena soared out of an exaltation of spirit scarcely less magical. "As the buildings rose, stately in size and unsurpassed in form and grace, the workmen vied with each other that the quality of their work might be enhanced by its artistic beauty."¹ Begun in 447 B.C., the Parthenon was so far completed nine years later that it was ready to receive the great statue of Athena.

With the entrance of the goddess the miracle was complete. All that the mind and hand of man could do to visualize a great national ideal had been done. Even the average Athenian citizen must have been aware that just as his life as a citizen was given a fullness more complete than anything his individual life could hold, therefore this central statue and seat of civic worship surpassed all other temples and statues of the goddess. The Erechtheum had greater loveliness, and the wooden image that it held claimed immemorial antiquity; the hearts of returning sailors leapt at the sight of the sun glinting on the spear and helmet of the Promachos, that great statue of Athena the Champion placed within the Propylæa; the boyish face and curling hair of the Lemnian Athena

¹ Plutarch, Pericles, xiii.

showed the goddess as a friend, but the supremacy of the enshrined "Parthenos" was unquestioned.

While the temple was being built Pheidias was preparing his statue of the goddess who was to inhabit it. It is difficult now to understand the beauty of this work of Pheidias, which in the judgment of contemporaries rivalled even his famous masterpiece, the Zeus of Olympia. The materials were gold and ivory, a combination suited to these dim windowless temples of antiquity. How Athena would shine when the straight shaft of light from the doorway fell upon her! The statue was adjusted by an elaborate system of balance and pressure, a fact that was illustrated by the popular belief that if the figure of a warrior were removed from Athena's shield the whole work would fall to the ground. By the malice of his enemies Pheidias was accused of having made this warrior a portrait of himself.

Our conception of the statue is based upon descriptions by old writers such as Pausanias and upon the few small representations that have survived. Judging from these it would seem that Pheidias gained his effect by the size and glory of his goddess and the heavy wealth of her golden apparel, rather than by the suggestion of personal charm. Athena stood with a spear in her left hand, a Victory poised on the outstretched palm of her right. On her head was a high helmet with a sphinx in the centre and griffins on either side. At her left was a shield with the battle of the Amazons on its outer face, the battle of Gods and Giants within, while on her sandals was carved another battle subject, the struggle between Lapiths and Centaurs—three subjects that were again repeated on the outer decoration of the temple. On the base of the statue a new design was introduced, the birth of Pandora. There is so little symbolism in Greek art, that it may be wrong to suggest it here, yet in any Gothic cathedral how many a Christian parallel might

be found to this figure of the woman through whose disobedience all evils were loosed upon the world, thus introduced at the base of the statue of the goddess triumphant over evil !

This prodigality of ornament might suggest that what Pheidias added to the richness of his goddess he subtracted from her dignity, were it not that the size of the statue made simplicity of treatment impossible. A space of material 30 feet high must be broken up by incident and subsidiary design. How bald, for example, the height of the sandals would have appeared had they been left as blank spaces 2 feet high by 5 feet long and just near the level of the spectator's eye. Moreover the whole spirit of the work required that the statue should be thus richly decorated. Athena here was guardian of the wealth no less than of the liberties of Athens.

A square of darker stones in the centre of the Parthenon pavement marks the place where the base of the statue stood, and behind this are traces of the wall that divided the temple in two parts. The worshipper who first sighted the Parthenon from the Propylæa must skirt one side of the building and enter at the east end. Passing through the outer portico he would push open the high door, and then in the main hall of the building known as the New Hekatompedon he would find himself facing the great statue. Like its predecessor the archaic temple, this hall was also 100 Attic feet in length. No light entered the Parthenon except through the high doorways. Travellers who visited it before its destruction in the days when it was used as a Turkish mosque mention its gloom, but mosque doors are heavily curtained, while those of an ancient temple probably stood wide. There is an absurd legend that the marble was translucent. A French traveller, De la Guilletiere, who claimed to have visited

Athens in 1676, speaks of the wonderful light coming through two polished and shining stones placed near each other at the far end of the mosque. De la Guilletiere was a fraud, a mere compiler who made his travels in his study-chair. Nevertheless a small and picturesque fact of this sort is not one that he would have invented, and it may well have been gathered from some more genuine traveller of the period. Wheler, who visited the Parthenon three years after De la Guilletiere, says: "My companion and I were not so much surprised with the obscurity of it as Monsieur Guiliter [*sic*], because the observations we had made on other heathen temples did make it no new thing unto us." Commenting on the transparent stones that excited the wonder of De la Guilletiere, he remarks dryly: "They are only of a transparent marble, an obscure light passing through it; and several holes being made deep in it makes the light look of a reddish or yellowish colour. But as for its shining in the night, that's a wonder never heard of until now, and as to his comparing it to the brightness of a carbuncle, that may pass for one of his *hyperboles*; our eyes being much too dim to see it." Spon, who accompanied Wheler, says: "I was not, like others, surprised at the darkness since I had noticed that all the light it received came from the openings which the Christians had cut in making the choir; and that thus in pagan times the only daylight that could enter came through the doors."

The temple itself was a simple oblong building with a door at either end and a partition-wall across the central hall. As far as can be seen there was no opening in this wall, and in order to pass from the eastern portion or cella in which the statue stood into the western portion, it may have been necessary to walk round outside the building and to enter it again through the western portico. When the Parthenon was turned into

a Christian church this wall was pierced with two doors. The hall behind was known as the Parthenon proper. It was divided into three by a double row of columns, and here the treasures of the State were stored.

Miss Harrison has compiled a delightful catalogue of these treasures. "Within this Parthenon, in the narrow special sense, were kept, as is known from inscriptions, vessels used for the sacred processions, furniture, clothes, jewels, dresses, and fragments of every description—single leaves from crowns, feet of beds, and the like ; in fact, such things as were best kept in a chamber easily closed and accessible, as a rule, only to State officers, for the public exhibition of which there was no adequate reason. We have the official list of these objects year by year from 417 to 406 B.C. In it are comprised such things as a gold crown, gold cups, uncoined gold, a golden drinking cup with a sacred silver stand, two silver-gilt nails, a silver-gilt mask, silver cups and a silver horn, gilt blades, gilt corn ears, a gold image on a pillar, and the like. In no case is money registered, so the idea must be given up that the Parthenon was a state bank."

Around the outside of this solid windowless building ran the frieze, 522 feet long, and outside this again the great colonnade with its carved metopes and its two gables at the outer ends carrying the pediment sculptures. It will be seen that the frieze being within the colonnade occupied the place where ornament was least visible, and yet in many eyes it is the crowning glory of the whole work. It was of this frieze, brought by Lord Elgin to London, that Haydon wrote those burning words, which introduced a new era in the study of art. Henceforward effeminate Apollos and self-conscious Venuses were no longer accounted the highest products of Greek art. "To these divine things" (he writes of the Elgin Marbles) "I owe every principle of art I may possess. I never enter among them without bowing to the

great spirit of art that reigns within them. I thank God daily that I was in existence on their arrival and will continue to do so until the end of my life. . . . Pilgrims from the remotest corners of the earth will visit their shrine and be pacified by their beauty."

It is only over the west front that any portion of this frieze can be seen *in situ*, and for this an evening light is best. But even in the best light it cannot be properly seen. The ground falls steeply away. The spectator is obliged to stand immediately under the figures, and a backward step may mean a fall of six feet. It is in the Acropolis Museum and in the British Museum that the design can best be studied. For many years it was looked upon as a purely decorative subject. Youths, maidens, water-carriers, and elders were placed here, it was said, as representations of the city life. Now it has been established beyond doubt that this is no mere procession of typical figures. It is indeed a representation of the city life, but it shows that life at a moment chosen because of its supreme importance. At the great Panathenaic festival which took place every four years there was carried in state through the town an embroidered robe which had been made for the goddess by those Athenian maidens, who had been living meantime in the sacred seclusion of the Pandroseum. The procession wound from the lower city to the Acropolis, and the robe was presented to the old wooden image of Athena in the Erechtheum.

On the west front of the frieze the procession is seen starting. Young soldiers are mounting or preparing to mount their horses. One is fastening his shoe, another donning his cloak. Here, as on the slabs of the Nike Balustrade, it is the grace of the daily action that is immortalized. On the north side the same knights are seen cantering on barebacked horses. This is the chivalry of ancient Athens, the flower of the nation. It was for the production of these soldier-citizens tempered like fine

steel that the State had laboured, and they in turn, as their oath showed, found in the State the aim of their existence. "I will not disgrace my sacred weapons nor desert the comrade who is placed by my side. I will fight for things holy and things profane whether I am alone or with others. I will hand on my fatherland greater and better than I found it. I will hearken to the magistrates and obey existing laws and those hereafter established by the people. I will not consent unto any that destroys or disobeys the constitution, but will prevent him whether I am alone or with others. I will honour the temple and religion which my forefathers established. So help me Aglaurus, Eugalios, Ares, Zeus, Thallo, Auxo, Hegemone."

In front of the knights come men in chariots, players on harps and pipes, then boys bringing water-vessels and leading the animals for the coming sacrifice. On the south side the same subjects are repeated with infinite divergence of detail. As Mr. Murray has pointed out, it is as though the procession had divided into two portions along the north and south sides of the building to meet again at the east end, where the scenes culminate over the main entrance in the presentation of the *peplos*. The maidens who made the robe are seen entering the presence of the divinities accompanied by the city magistrates. In the centre gods and goddesses are seated reclining as at a feast. They are clad in the lightest draperies, without any insignia of office, gods by virtue of their godhead only, distinguished from each other by most subtle touches of characterization.

Outside the frieze ran the colonnade of forty-six mighty marble columns. Although so terribly destroyed in the centre by the cannons of the Venetians in 1687, enough remains to give an impression of the whole work. Indeed, in a sense the beauty and importance of the colonnade has been enhanced by the destruction



NORTH-EAST ANGLE OF THE PARTHENON
WITH THE HILL OF LYCABETTUS

of the inner building. Against the background of clear sky the form and colour of each individual column is given its full value. To the casual visitor who accepts what he sees without further question this colonnade is to-day "the Parthenon," and may even stand in some minds for the type of all Greek temples. It was in the proportions of this colonnade that Mr. Penrose discovered the subtleties of Greek architecture. He showed how the long, straight lines of stylobate and architrave are made to rise slightly in the centre, so as to counteract the illusion of a downward dip which, owing to the formation of the human eye, would otherwise appear. The columns are also made to lean slightly inwards and to taper almost imperceptibly towards the top, thus giving the impression that the solid lines of roof and metopes are easily borne. The columns in Mycenæan architecture are wider at the top than at the bottom, and the effect always suggests discomfort. They seem flattened by the weight above. Apropos of the proportions of the Parthenon, visitors are often puzzled by the height of the steps surrounding the colonnade. Except in places where blocks of marble are placed as subsidiary stairs, these steps are suitable only for a race of giants, and the sight of a procession of ordinary mortals mounting them would have been ungainly and almost ridiculous. The fact is that according to the laws of Greek architecture a colossal temple demanded colossal steps. The joints of the stones are so precisely laid that they appear almost to have grown together. Stuart reports that he tried to break them and found them as firmly united as if they had never been separate. Very finely ground surfaces seem to have some molecular attraction.

In the carvings on the metopes and on the pediment at each end the genius of the Greek sculptor found inspiration in limitation. On frieze, metopes, and pediments three different problems presented themselves.

The long and comparatively narrow frieze had to be filled with some continuous design, unrolling itself in epic cadences without any break until the great culmination was reached, and for this the theme was found in the Panathenaic procession. The metopes, on the contrary, must form a series of complete pictures having sufficient relation to each other to give unity to the design without losing the decorative feeling of varied movement. Each subject had to fill a square panel, a difficult space to deal with when applied to the human figure. This difficulty was met by the choice of scenes of contest as the subject for most of the metopes. The lines of prostrate or attacking figures gave diagonal and horizontal curves that contrasted well with the repeated perpendiculars of the triglyphs. On the north and south sides was the battle between Lapiths and Centaurs (the figure of the Centaur lending itself most happily to the square space), on the west the battle of Greeks and Amazons, and on the east the battle of Gods and Giants.

In Mr. Murray's view the subjects of the metopes were chosen to represent the disorderly forces in the universe which the worship of Athena would subdue. They contrasted with the stately procession round the frieze much as the gargoyles on the outside of a Gothic church are meant to contrast with the cherub and angel faces of the interior. Round the body of the temple moved the spirit of Athens. In the interior was the ideal of order and worship, on the exterior the realities of struggle and occasional defeat.

The sculptures that filled the two pediment gables east and west were narrative or didactic rather than symbolic. They repeated the two primary articles of faith in the cult of Athena. On the east end the birth of Athena from the head of her father Zeus, on the west the contest between Athena and Poseidon. At the east end there are two sculptures that remain in place. Firstly, the

horses' heads, which in the extreme left angle drew the chariot of the sun as he rose from the sea ; and secondly, the head of one of the horses driven by Selene, the moon-goddess, as she dropped beneath the horizon on the right. The moment chosen for representation is the moment of dawn. In the centre of the gable where it was highest stood Zeus and Athena, in what attitudes we do not know. They had vanished before Carrey made his drawing of the pediment in 1674, from which most of our information is drawn. Somewhere near them was Athena's brother Hephaistos, who assisted the miraculous birth by breaking the head of Zeus from which Athena sprang. On either side of these three stood other deities. Next came sitting and reclining figures filling the long angles. These groups are seen in the British Museum. Various names have been attributed to them, but as they are there merely as spectators, their identification is necessarily uncertain. The horses of the sun and moon closed in the two angles. The spirit of the whole composition is best summed up in the Homeric hymn to Athena : "Olympos, the abode of the gods, trembled at the sight of her, the earth moaned heavily, the sea was agitated, raising its purple waves and tossing its brine. Helios, the sun-god, stayed his horses, what time Athena was doffing her immortal armour to the joy of her father Zeus."

For the west pediment Carrey's drawing supplies the main figures of the central group. The moment chosen is that after the rival emblems have been created. Poseidon and Athena are shown drawing away from each other. The olive-trees perhaps filled the space between, while the salt spring gushed out behind Poseidon. On either side stood the chariots in which Athena and Poseidon had arrived on the scene, each chariot having a driver, and an attendant at the horses' heads. The horses are made to rear as though in alarm

at the sudden display of divine energy. Behind each chariot was a series of figures cut off from the central action. Of these Mr. Murray says: "By their presence they indicate the permanent effects of the momentary dispute of the deities on the district in question—that is, Attica. The produce of the land, especially olive-growing was to be supreme over seafaring. It was what would now be called a 'Little Athens' policy."

This, then, was the aspect of the Parthenon as it stood for centuries, every detail of its ornament tending in some way to the glorification of the goddess. To make the picture complete one must add vivid touches of colour on the background of the sculpture, on the borders of the garments, and possibly also on the bodies of horses and riders; and to the figures on the frieze add metal wreaths and bridles made of gilded bronze. Yet even with the help of descriptions and drawings left by those who saw the Parthenon before its destruction the original vision cannot be recaptured. It is wiser perhaps to accept the temple as it is to-day with a new beauty even in ruin.

Thackeray said some unkind things about modern Athens, but the ruins on the Acropolis brought him to his knees. "To say truth, when one walks among the nests of eagles, and sees the prodigious eggs they laid, a certain feeling of discomfiture must come over us smaller birds. You and I could not invent—it even stretches our minds painfully to try and comprehend part of the beauty of the Parthenon—ever so little of it—the beauty of a single column, a fragment of a broken shaft lying under the astonishing blue sky there, in the midst of that unrivalled landscape."

III

THE ERECHTHEUM

The Parthenon was built to replace the old "hundred-foot" temple to Athena. But it was not forgotten that this old temple had guarded other divinities and also the emblems of Poseidon's trident-mark and the sacred pool or "sea" as it was called. These could not be removed from the precinct. The Parthenon therefore, beautiful though it was, did not satisfy the religious conscience of the Athenians. There must be another temple to replace the old house of Erechtheus where Athena had first dwelt. Thus it came about that on the Acropolis there were two great temples of the goddess, each fulfilling a different function. The Parthenon is the centre of State worship. The Erechtheum is, so to speak, her home. Athena shared this temple with Erechtheus and with other ancient divinities; with Poseidon her ancient rival, with Butes the father of the royal house, and with Hephaistos the brother of Athena in her domestic capacity as *Athena Ergane*, the goddess of good workmanship. Gods and heroes were thus sheltered together under the roof of the new building.

It was the home of conservatism, the refuge of good old cults which were no longer fashionable but which it would be dangerous to neglect. Here were the sacred emblems, witnesses to the bygone strife between Athena and Poseidon. The deep triple mark where the god struck the rock with his trident, the salt spring "sounding like the sea," and growing in the temple enclosure the sacred olive tree that shot again the night after the Persians had destroyed it by fire.

In the Parthenon the goddess was represented by the most magnificent work of art man's hand could pro-

duce. In the Erechtheum it was her old wooden statue, the sacred image dropped from heaven, that was cherished. The Parthenon celebrated the glories of the new epoch, the Erechtheum retained the spirit and the memories of long-venerated things. Yet though the Erechtheum was carefully planned to accommodate the old cults, the architects escaped all tendency to archaism in their work. It is as beautiful as the Parthenon, though executed in a different spirit. In it there is a more intimate charm and a greater multiplicity of detail. It seems a work of love rather than of worship. The carving of the stone is so delicate that modern hands, even with modern tools, have never been able to reproduce the fineness of the original.

It is impossible now to tell what subject was chosen for the sculptured frieze, but as a whole the ornament of the temple is not chosen to teach but to give delight. Whereas the sculptures on the Parthenon suggest the first articles of faith in the creed of an Athenian, there is no religious significance of the six figures of women who bear the south porch of the Erechtheum. They are known as caryatides, in remembrance perhaps of the inhabitants of Caryæ who were brought captive in the fifth century B.C. Noble captives they are too with their finely poised, vigorous bodies, the heads that rise instead of bending to the weight of the marble porch. One of these figures is now in the British Museum—an exile as well as a captive. Her place was filled by a cast which weathered to a darker colour and stood shamefaced among her step-sisters. Last year a new cast was sent from England.

In 1903 the scaffolding, which had surrounded the Parthenon during its restoration, was moved to the Erechtheum, and this afforded a good opportunity to subject the whole building to a closer examination than had hitherto been possible. As a result of this, many

small discoveries were made and two which are of capital importance.

The first concerns the famous trident-mark in the north porch. To the left on entering there is an opening in the pavement, protected no doubt in antiquity by a parapet. Looking down through this we see three irregular holes in the rock, which in all probability were shown to the ancients, as they have been to modern pilgrims, as the imprint of Poseidon's trident. The new discovery confirms this, the accepted identification. Mr. Balanos, the Greek architect in charge of the repairs, found evidence showing that immediately over this opening in the pavement there was a corresponding opening (3 feet square) in the ceiling above formed by the omission of one of the marble coffers. This opening was carried upwards to the sloping roof as a square shaft enclosed by four slabs. Thus the trident-mark, although enclosed within the porch, was left open to the sky.

The second matter concerns the original plan of the Erechtheum. Unlike almost every other ancient temple, its plan is strikingly unsymmetrical; and it has one feature—the projection of the north porch beyond the west end of the building is absolutely without parallel. Again, the elevation of the west front is inharmonious and undignified. There also are three ground-levels, and three kinds of piers are used. It has been suggested that the temple as we have it is a compromise. The accompanying plan shows in red what may have been the completion of the original scheme. Was it not originally intended that the Erechtheum should have another wing on the west side answering to that on the east? In this way a line drawn through the centre of the building would pass through the middle of the north and south porches, while a colonnade at the west end would answer to that on the east. The temple would then have

been truly double, with two cellas, two opisthodomoi, and a narrow central hall over the salt spring. In order to light this long array of rooms it is possible that those marked in the plan 2 and 4 would have been left unroofed (one may have been an open court for the olive), number 3 would have been lighted by entrances into the south and north porches, while numbers 1 and 5 would have opened into the eastern and western porticoes. There is much to be said for this hypothesis. Whatever the architect originally planned, we cannot believe that any Athenian would have been capable of suggesting the plan of the Erechtheum as it exists to-day. If Dr. Dörpfeld's theory is right, it remains to ask why the original project was abandoned. This question is best answered on the ground where the western portico of the Erechtheum would have stood had it been completed.

This plot of ground was sacred to a nymph called Pandrosos, "All-dew," and was known as the Pandroseum. Later Greek legend accounted for the presence and importance of this goddess by making her the one faithful daughter of Cecrops (p. 78), to whom the care of the infant Erichthoneus was committed. On the other hand her name ("All-dew") and the extreme veneration with which her precinct was regarded, together with certain mysterious rites imposed on her votaries, indicate a cult of even greater antiquity than the legend of Cecrops. The Hellenes perhaps found Pandrosos already established on the Acropolis when they came thither and fitted her into their mythology as they best might. At all events her territory on the Acropolis bordered the holiest ground where the sacred emblems were sheltered by the new Erechtheum, and she, the faithful daughter of Cecrops, became, in a sense, the guardian deity of all discreet maidenhood. Her precinct was the home of certain dedicated maidens chosen from the best Athenian families and entrusted with the task of

weaving the sacred *peplos* which was carried through the city at the time of the great Panathenaic festival. But though dedicated thus to the service of Athena, these "Anephoroi" were not like the Vestal Virgins in Rome vowed to lifelong seclusion and virginity. The worship of Athena was less exacting in its demands than that of Vesta; the maidens of the Pandroseum, though guarded in an atmosphere of jealous sanctity not unlike that which surrounded the Vestal Virgins, returned to a normal home life when their time of service was ended. They were but children when they were secluded on the Acropolis, and they returned to their own homes at the age of eleven. The white garments and gold ornaments which they had worn during their time of service were dedicated to the goddess. Their nominal task was the supervision of the weaving of the *peplos*, but how much of the actual work was done by these little ladies of tender years, and how much was left to the priestess and her attendants is a matter on which we are never enlightened. In the eyes of Athens the maidens were "responsible" for the task, and thus the glamour of youth and beauty were not wanting from Athena's garment. What other duties engrossed their time? There seems to have been a mysterious element in their seclusion. Even their name "Anephoroi" has never been satisfactorily explained. Once a year those whose term of office was about to end took part in a sacred rite without being enlightened as to its meaning. Descending from the Pandroseum by the steep flight of steps, remains of which may still be seen near this point, they made their way to the precinct of "Aphrodite in the Gardens," bearing on their heads baskets, of which the contents were unknown. Greek mythology, which regarded Pandrosos as the type of faithful obedience, naturally saw here an allusion to the basket that might not be opened. The rite seems older than the story, and probably behind it there lies some old

charm to secure fertility. For the rest, we gather that these maidens enjoyed life as young creatures should. A bronze statue of Isocrates, represented as a boy riding, was put up in "the place where the Anephoroi played ball,"^{*} and the words conjure up a picture of the white draperies, the tip-toe flights, and the laughter that might float about the sacred hill-top on its golden evenings.

Before leaving the precinct of Pandrosos there is one other shrine to notice. A gap in the west wall of the Erechtheum is bridged over by a huge block of marble. Presumably the ground beneath was considered too sacred to have a stone laid on it, and may have been the legendary site of the tomb of Cecrops. This tomb and the precinct of Pandrosos appear to have been the two insurmountable obstacles that prevented the original plan of the Erechtheum from being completed on its westward side. It would seem that the authorities in Athens accepted the plan and that it was not until the work was actually begun that popular prejudice prevented the execution of the original scheme. But here, as in the case of the Propylæa, the architect was tenacious and shaped his building so that at any time it could be extended and completed according to the original scheme.

There is therefore a threefold vision of the Acropolis—as it is, as it was, and lastly as it might have been.

As it is, with the outlines defaced and the colours gone, but with the still subtler beauty that only time can give: the ruddy tint in the fissures of the marble, the mellow golden light over its surface, the play of the blue air around the broken columns, poppy and camomile pressing up through the stones, daylight penetrating the mysteries and revealing hidden beauties; moonlight setting its magic on the desolation; thunder-clouds banking the pallid ruins when the wet pavement shines white

^{*} Plutarch, "Lives of the Orators."

with reflection ; the whole building laid open to the play of rain and sun.

As it was, with strong colour on the gleaming buildings, with the colonnade of the Chalkotheke, or Storehouse for bronzes, on the south side of the hill, the gigantic bronze image of Athena the Champion, the crowd of smaller marble and bronze statues covering the hill-top, and the people thronging among them ; the worshippers ascending the steep way ; the drivers with hoarse cries goading the oxen up the slippery paths ; the country-folk staring enthralled, and the citizens too familiar with the spectacle to interrupt their gossip as they climb. Inside the temple, the immense presence of the jewel-eyed goddess in all her divinity.

Lastly, there is this other vision of the Acropolis *as it might have been*, or rather as it once existed in the great minds of that day—Pericles, Pheidias, Mnesicles, Ictinus, and others whose names even are lost. In this vision the Propylæa spreads two broad wings to guard the whole west front of the hill ; the old haphazard buildings covering the north side are swept away, and in their place stands a temple, double, like the Propylæa, with two wings and two porches. There would then have been two temples on the Acropolis of equal dignity—the Parthenon, strong in simple lines and bold relief, and the Erechtheum, exquisite in its elaboration of ornament : one temple set up for the worship of Athena, the guardian of the health and wealth of the State, the giver of all good counsels, the daughter of Zeus, and the victorious rival of Poseidon ; the other glorifying Athena, the home-goddess, the sister of Hephaistos, at once the craftsman's conscience and his inspiration, and the friend of Erechtheus.

The serenity of Greek architecture must not blind us to the pregnant fact that the laws of art were still subservient to the common law of citizenship ; the artist, no

less than the soldier, put his service at the disposal of the State and accepted at her hands even the mutilation of his ideals.

The artists and statesmen of the greatest age gave magnanimously of their best, even though their dreams had to remain unrealized. It is only in the third millennium that their silence has been interpreted, and perhaps even this vindication of after-ages was as far from their wishes as from their thoughts. It is as though the makers of these temples had stamped upon them the device, "I abide by what I have done."

IV

THE TEMPLE OF VICTORY

The original date of the little temple to Nike Apteros (the Wingless Victory) is not precisely known. It is obvious, however, that it must date from about the same time as the other Propylæa buildings. One might suppose that the architects of the Propylæa, when they found their plans crippled by the neighbourhood of this sacred site, set themselves to make a virtue of necessity; since their entrance buildings were curtailed, they may have consoled themselves by balancing the group with this little gem of Ionic architecture. To find a temple outside the sanctuary gates is unusual, and the fact that its position never strikes one as strange is just another tribute to the skill with which the proportions of the building are fitted to the site. The spot must have been sacred to Athena from quite early times and was associated with her in her victorious aspect as "Athena Nike." Then, as the process of differentiation continued, the precinct was said to be sacred to Victory, and Athena's name was dropped. But the old wooden image kept on

the spot was really an image of Athena and not of a Winged Victory. So the pretty tale was invented that the ground and afterwards the temple were dedicated to a Wingless Victory who would never fly away.

The temple is set on a terrace from which the rock drops precipitously. From here one looks right out to sea ; not, as the legend of old Ægeus might lead one to suppose, that the sea beats up to the base of the cliff, but rather that the intervening ground lies far below, and the eye naturally finds its level on the blue waters of the Saronic Gulf beyond. Heated with the steep climb up to the Acropolis, it is good to step out on the wide terrace, to be greeted by this birdlike sense of space and height and by the freshness of a good sea-breeze. Standing here one sees afresh how impossible it is to separate, even in thought, the temple from its situation. To the Greek architect the two formed one whole. The lines of the slender Ionic columns follow out and carry on the soaring impression of the cliff, and while the rock ennobles the temple, the temple rests like a benediction on the rock. At Sunium also the temple and its rocky pedestal seem to have grown together to a like unity of sentiment. From earliest times the Greek genius was responsive to that indefinable charm which to-day is called the "Spirit of Place" and which to the Greek betokened the spot dear to a god. In the words of Pliny : "Trees were temples of divinities. . . . Nor have we more worship for images glittering with gold and ivory than for groves and the very silence that is in them." Thus it came about that the site on which an architect was called to plant his temple was not deliberately selected, but had been marked out by the fine instinct of generations. His work was to create a building to express the brooding spirit of the place. The Temple of Victory crowns the rock as the laurel wreath might crown the rugged head of some old warrior.

The thought of victory was further carried out in the decoration of the parapet that originally ran breast-high round the precipitous sides of the temple terrace. This parapet bore on its outer face a glorious sculptured frieze which the worshipper would see above him on his right as he ascended the steps of the Propylæa. Such of the slabs as remain are now to be seen in the Acropolis Museum. The frieze seems to have represented the celebration of a festival commemorating some great victory. There is the draped and wingless figure of Athena Nike, and there is also a succession of beautiful winged creatures—Victories, Graces or Loves—which in a certain gracious artlessness of pose are unsurpassed. Their light draperies show the play of their limbs. Two Nikes, with shoulders thrown back and down-pressed feet, are restraining bulls led to the sacrifice. These two panels are evidently intended to balance each other, since the brave diagonal swing from shoulder to ankle occurs once from right to left and on the other from left to right. Another Victory is fixing up a trophy; another gaily balances herself on the bull's back. The artist does not insist on the ceremonial side of his subject. He seems rather to have allowed his chisel freely to follow the play of his fancy. The Nike fastening—or unfastening—her shoe might seem to come oddly among the procession. Yet here the attitude needs no other justification than its own perfection of grace. A Frenchman has made the pretty suggestion that the shoe is loosened to indicate that this Victory will make herself at home.

Looking at the temple as it stands to-day, it is difficult to believe that from the years 1688 to 1835 its stones were dispersed and built into a bastion made by the Turks at the approach of Morosini (see p. 235). Ross, Schaubert, and Hansen are the names of the three architects to whom the present clever restoration is due. The general effect is probably much the same as that produced by the

original temple, though naturally its vicissitudes have left their mark. The original roof and gables are missing and four panels on the north and west sides of the frieze have been replaced by casts. The originals are in the British Museum.

This same buttress of rock on which the temple stands has other associations than those of victory. It was here that the old King Ægeus climbed day by day to watch for his son's boat returning from Crete ; and this was the pinnacle of rock from which he threw himself in despair at sight of the black sail. This spot is the natural watch-tower of the Acropolis towards the sea as the Belvedere Bastion is on its landward side. Here luckless Phædra also came each day to gaze across the sea to the purple hills above Trœzen where Hippolytus lived, and somewhere in this rock she placed a shrine to "home-keeping love" to quiet her truant heart.

Long since on Pallas hill,
Deep in the rock, that Love no more might roam,
She built a shrine and named it "Love at Home."
And the rock held it, but its face away
Seeks Trœzen o'er the seas.

Her watch also ended in tragedy. In the great theatre not far below, the Athenian audience saw her story unrolled by Euripides, and it has been made to live again for us not only in the musical translation by Gilbert Murray, but also in Walter Pater's curious magical prose. It is pleasant enough to linger upon these fresh heights dreaming of "old, unhappy far-off things." Let Pater tell the story :—

"Hippolytus, you remember, is the illegitimate son of Theseus. Phædra, the wronged wife, a fiery soul with wild, strange blood in her veins, forgetting her fears of this illegitimate rival of her children, seems now to have seen him for the first time, loved at last the very touch of his fleecy cloak, and would have had him of her own

religion—the worship of Aphrodite. But Hippolytus has given himself to the worship of the chaste huntress Artemis. He will have nothing to do with Phædra or her divinity. In an anguish of rage, Phædra denounces him falsely to Theseus, and Theseus flung away readily upon him one of three precious curses with which Poseidon had indulged him. Hippolytus is driven from the palace, those still unsatisfied curses in truth going on either side of him like living creatures unseen. Legend tells briefly how, a competitor for pity with Adonis and Icarus and Hyacinth, and other doomed creatures of immature radiance in all story to come, he set forth joyously for the chariot-races, not of Athens but of Træzen, her rival. Once more he wins the prize; he says good-bye to admiring friends anxious to entertain him, and by night starts off homeward, as of old, like a child, returning quickly through the solitude in which he had never lacked company and was now to die. Through all the perils of darkness he had guided the chariot safely along the curved shore; the dawn was come and a little breeze astir as the grey, level spaces parted delicately into white and blue, when in a moment an earthquake, or Poseidon the earth-shaker himself, or an angry Aphrodite awake from the deep betimes, rent the tranquil surface; a great wave leapt suddenly into the placid distance of the Attic shore, and was surging here to the very necks of the plunging horses, a moment since enjoying with him the caress of the morning air, but now, wholly forgetful of their old affectionate habit of obedience, dragging their leader headlong over the rough pavements. Evening and dawn might seem to have met on that hapless day through which they drew him home entangled in the trappings of the chariot that had been his ruin, till he lay at length, grey and haggard, at the rest he had longed for dimly amid the buffeting of those murderous stones.”¹ Then

¹ W. Pater, “Greek Studies.”

Theseus, who had unwittingly murdered his father, finds that he has now murdered his son through that same rash carelessness. This seaward corner of the Acropolis is indeed the home of tragic memories. The Athenians in Pericles' day felt the associations of the spot too strong to be resisted and raised their protest in a Philistine revolt against one of the noblest projects of architecture. Well, one may forgive them. They lost the ideal Propylæa, but they gained the Nike temple.

CHAPTER VI

ON THE SOUTH SIDE OF THE HILL

I

THE DIONYSIAC THEATRE

THE Dionysiac Theatre is the sunniest spot in Athens. The tourists know it and bring their tea-baskets. The lizards know it and steal out to bask on marble chairs dedicated to priests and magistrates. The Athenian audiences of classical times must also have known it as they sat there the whole of a spring day with the sun in their eyes and the rock behind them glowing like a furnace.

For the winter months it was, and still is, an ideal spot. The long lines of marble seats sloping away in a perspective of curves now mellowed to tones of lemon and pale gold, in shadow a pearl-grey. In front the marble pavement of the orchestra is broken with rough seams and stains. The chair of state belonging to the Dionysiac priest is the most perfect bit of symmetry of its kind in existence, and fortunately no Lord Elgin has been at pains to remove it. Beyond the broken stones and the hilly middle distance there are white and poppy-coloured sails dotting the gulf, with Ægina's purple peaks behind. Overhead the sky of clear wintry blueness, so different from summer's leaden heat-shroud

Under the south slope of the Acropolis at its eastern

end the ground has a steady downward gradient and shows a tendency to break into natural terraces. It is not as at Epidaurus, a theatre made by Nature, yet Nature lent herself kindly to the work, and man had need only to scarp out the hill-side with tiers of seats, to support the curving sides with masonry, and to level the central ring. That the natural formation of the ground has been taken into consideration is plain from the irregular design of the theatre; the two sides are not symmetrical and at the top it has no definite boundary. The seats merge into the rock. As a London crowd will swarm lamp-posts and climb railings to watch a passing show, so the Athenian spectators covered every obtainable point of vantage. Behind the stone seats the rock itself gave sitting or standing accommodation, and every space would seem to have been filled, though the performance could have been only imperfectly seen and at this distance hardly heard.

In the sixth century there was no theatre here, but remains of a little temple have been found, with a stone circle marking the dancing-place before it. Here, in the time of Peisistratus, Dionysus was worshipped. Even in those early days the religious dance was well on its course of dramatic development. Already to the slow revolving chorus-dance with its alternating strophe and antistrophe had been added the quick musical measure of the Dithyramb. After the union of these two the evolution of the true drama followed fast, and the turning-point was reached in the days of Peisistratus, when the popularity of Homer led to the introduction of plots taken from the Homeric cycle. Once it had been shown possible to improve on the old stereotyped forms, other developments came naturally as the artistic spirit was spurred to further experiment. With the leader as interlocutor and the chorus as reciters the unfolding of the old, well-known stories at once became dramatic.

When to question and answer was added further dialogue, single members of the chorus assumed the parts of the chief characters in the play. As these rôles became prominent the importance of the chorus diminished, until in the fully developed drama they appear as mere commentators. Their remarks interrupt the progress of the story. Sometimes the interruption has the highest dramatic value, as in the plays of Euripides, when a pure lyric relieves for a moment the situation too highly charged with emotional intensity. Sometimes the interruptions seem to introduce an element of commonplace—as for instance in the *Œdipus* of Sophocles when the king appears with blood streaming from the empty eye-sockets, and the chorus can strike no deeper note than the cry—

Alas, unhappy man ! I would have held
Some converse with thee, but thy looks affright me ;
I cannot bear to speak with thee.

This prominence of the chorus is, however, too deeply inwrought into the substance and essence of the drama for any escape from it to have been possible. Neither authors nor audience would have desired it. In essence the chorus *is* the play. A tragedy without its chorus would have been unthinkable. The enfranchisement of comedy was marked when it also was “given a chorus,” and here its presence is invaluable. If there is any fundamental essence of humour peculiar to all ages, it is surely found in the serious comments of the spectator who cannot see a joke. Yet it was not without reason that the Athenian Government showed reluctance to admit comedy to the full rights of the drama. For whereas tragedy was essentially religious, comedy could at most be only moral. It was Aristophanes who won for comedy its permanent place in the Attic theatre. “Starting with what is always, *primâ facie*, the prose

of everyday life, its acrid controversies, its vulgar and tedious types, and even its particular individuals—for Aristophanes does not hesitate to introduce his contemporaries in person on the stage—he fits to this gross and heavy stuff the wings of imagination, scatters from it the clinging mists of banality and spite, and speeds it forth through the lucid heaven of art amid peals of musical laughter and snatches of lyric song.”¹

To say that Greek genius showed at its best when it was working within formal limits is to insist on a commonplace, yet until the strictly conventional nature of the Greek play is grasped, how shall we understand the moving excitement of the throng who flock eagerly twice a year to their theatre to endure the fatigue and discomfort of sitting the whole day through among a heated crowd, for the sake of seeing the last new play? The enthusiasm that brings them here is not the same that inspires the queue of weary Londoners waiting for a seat in the pit. The Athenian is not to have his pulses stirred by sensational presentations of emotion, by broken cadences of voice, by ravishing postures. His actors will walk on high shoes, the play of their features will be hidden by masks. All sweet cadences will be lost in that vast, open space that surely requires some artificial aid for the voice. Neither will his eyes be delighted by elaborate scenery. The costume is stereotyped and varies little from one time to another, and the scenery is that same colonnaded hall which he saw in last year's play, if indeed it can be called scenery at all. For all this he cares nothing. Eyes and ears are straining towards the ring where the chorus circle. He must not miss a line of this magical music of Euripides nor one of Aeschylus' sonorous chants.

This was the spirit that brought the Athenians in such crowds to their great theatre. Apart from the fact

¹ G. Lowes Dickinson, "Greek View of Life."

that the play was given once only, and had therefore all the excitement of a first night added to that of the "positively last performance," there was also this keen, critical instinct to be satisfied. Every Athenian was an art critic. His verdict was a serious matter to himself and to others. What the Athenians approved or condemned would be in the same measure approved or condemned throughout Greece. That they deserved their fame is seen in the fact that posterity has in very few cases reversed the judgment of contemporaries. The career of the poet must have been an exciting one under this régime. Within a few hours of the production of his play its reputation throughout the Greek world was fixed.

Another characteristic of Greek poetry, dependent on the convention of the drama, is that it had to be judged by ear alone. This seems to have given to the Athenian audience an especial sensitiveness to the beauty of the spoken word. Invaluable in art, this quick receptiveness became a dangerous asset in politics, and the name *ὤτρος*, meaning literally a long-eared owl, was the nickname invented for those too easily carried away by eloquence.

The Dionysiac Theatre at Athens is neither the largest nor the most beautiful that the world has seen, but standing here we realize that this is *the* theatre *par excellence*. The original dancing-ground of the chorus, once perhaps a mere threshing-floor, has been traced partially outside the present orchestra. It formed a complete circle and therefore was better suited for dances than for the production of performances that must be viewed from one side only. Very early its south side must have been blocked by the *skene* or shed in which the actors dressed. In time this came to bear the scenery, and became the "scene"; the stage in front of it was known as the *proskenion*. The earliest stage of which anything now exists is that which was finished

under the administration of Lycurgus in the fourth century B.C. It consisted of a hall with a tower at either end and a portico behind. The long lines of masonry that run right across the enclosure and cut the walls of the earliest temple, belong to this stoa. With a plan all these lines can be made out on the spot. It must be confessed that the first impression of these ruins behind the stage is one of mere confusion. A good plan is given in Prof. E. Gardner's "Ancient Athens." The first scenery was probably merely leaned against the wall between the towers. Some time after Lycurgus a row of columns was set up some feet in advance of the old wall and behind the foundations of the front walls of the towers. The result of this change would be to make a longer and more even front in place of the deep recess with towers. Traces of these columns may still be seen on the right-hand side of the stage as we face the auditorium. Whether or no these columns supported a raised stage is a matter on which archæologists are still divided. Enough to note that the stage grew while the orchestra shrank, as the importance of the acting came to overshadow that of the chorus. In the reign of Nero another stage was built and by this time it is certain that the actors used a raised platform. The front line of the stage comes again considerably nearer the orchestra; the back wall is, however, the only line that it is easy to make out on the spot. Lastly comes the stage of Phædrus running from wing to wing of the auditorium. A flight of stone steps leads up to the middle of this stage and on the top step is the inscription recording its erection by Phædrus, "a governor of life-giving Attica." The inscription seems to date from the third century A.D. Whoever this Phædrus may have been, he did not scruple to avail himself of the good work of his predecessors. The front of his stage is a patchwork of older reliefs which do not fit their place and have been

much mutilated. The first relief on the left shows Zeus seated, while Hermes stands by with the child Dionysus in his arms. The second shows Icarius sacrificing the goat to Dionysus. Further along to the right is the figure of Silenus. To the generations of cramped spectators he must have seemed the typification of discomfort as he crouched in the niche that is obviously too small for him. Remains of a similar figure have been found. This probably filled a corresponding niche on the other side of the stage.

In Roman times the theatre seems to have been used for gladiatorial shows, and it was on this account that the upright slabs of marble were placed along the front of the seats to protect the spectators. To this period also belongs the covering of the gutter which runs around the orchestra and which originally carried off the rain-water for the whole building.

The first row of carved marble chairs emphasizes the essentially religious character of these dramatic performances. Here in the central seat of honour sat the Priest of Dionysus. The proportions of its curving back, the arms finished with griffins' claws, and the delicate carving of its low reliefs, still give a thrill of pleasure. Below the seat are griffins fighting with Arimaspians, on its back crouch the Dionysiac satyrs, while on each side kneels a dainty Eros setting a cock to fight. The strange, free imagination of the Greeks saw no incongruity in choosing a cock-fight as a subject for the decoration of their priest's chair. One author mentions an annual cock-fight in the theatre which somehow commemorated the Persian invasion. On each side of the Dionysiac Priest sat the priests of the various temples in Athens, some forty in number, while here places were also reserved for the chief magistrates and heralds. The second rank of seats are without backs. Here the populace came, the whole

theatre holding, it is estimated, at least twenty thousand people. Plato indeed makes an estimate of thirty thousand. When our modern theatres are built with a box for the bishop, a row of stalls for vicars and magistrates, and seats without backs for the mere play-goer, then we may also hope for a pure classical drama.

The seats are carefully planned with a view to seating as many people as possible. Thirteen inches is all the space allowed to each spectator, but the base of the seat above is slightly hollowed out to allow him to sit well back in his seat. Each row thus acted as footstool to those above. The lines defining the rightful province of each spectator are carefully marked, but in spite of this there must have been plenty of shoving and grumbling. Even in the performances at the Roman circuses to which ladies were admitted Ovid shows that manners were far from perfect. "You who sit to our right be considerate of this lady, you hurt her by leaning up against her, and you who sit behind us draw back your legs, and be civil enough not to press our backs with your hard knees."

Dr. Dörpfeld, to whose study of the theatre most of our knowledge is due, has discovered some holes at the ends of some of the lower seats which may have held supports for some kind of awning; but it is difficult to see how this could have been arranged without interrupting the view of those above. I believe that the true Athenian never shrank from the sun but came here to bask, lizard-like, as he watched the play.

We shall get but a partial idea of the place that the theatre occupied in the life of the city if we think of it only in its connection with the drama, gladiatorial shows, and cock-fighting. Once the populace had acquired the habit of assembling here it was soon found a much more convenient meeting place than the old building on the Pnyx. Even as early as the time of

Thucydides some of the national assemblies had taken place here. By the time of Lycurgus the theatre had become the regular place of assembly, and he seems to have acknowledged the change when he covered the rocky hill-side with the marble benches that we see to-day. He also set up statues of the three great tragic poets, Æschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides.

To the east of the theatre there lay a great Odeum or concert hall built by Pericles. Its exact site is no longer known, but Vitruvius says that the Odeum stood near as you went out of the theatre on the left.

One picture history has handed down to us of this Odeum with its sloping tentlike roof and of the great open theatre lying silent and deserted in the moonlight on that night of May in the year 415 B.C. whose doings thrilled the whole conscience of Athens with horror. Suddenly this moonlit space was filled with dark figures who moved about and talked together without noticing the one solitary witness lurking unknown among the shadows of the stage buildings. As dramatic as any of the plays produced here is the account thus briefly given by that one witness, whose word alone condemned so many of his fellow-citizens and lost for Athens her best commander in the Sicilian expedition. "Dioclesides said that he had a slave at Laurium, and that he had occasion to go to him for a payment due to him. He rose early, mistaking the time, and set forth ; it was a full moon. When he had come to the Gateway of Dionysus he saw several persons descending from the Odeum into the orchestra ; afraid of them he drew into the shade and crouched down between the pillar and the column with the bronze statue of the general. He saw persons about three hundred in number standing round in groups of fifteen or some of twenty men, and seeing their faces in the moonlight he recognized most of them. After seeing this he went to Laurium and on the follow-

ing day heard of the mutilation of the Hermæ; and so he knew immediately that these men were the culprits."

II

THE DRAMATIC MONUMENTS

The dramas performed in the theatre at the feast of Dionysus were competitive. Each piece was produced at the expense of some public-spirited citizen who paid for the hire of the chorus and the staging of the play. This citizen was known as the *choragus*, and naturally he did his utmost to win the popular favour. If his play were voted the best at that festival a prize was awarded in token of his victory, and he was allowed to set up a monument in the neighbourhood of the theatre bearing a bronze tripod in a conspicuous position. Much ingenuity was spent in devising different types of pedestal to hold the tripod. One contained a small statue by Praxiteles. The few remaining in place to-day show widely different types. In time the region round the theatre came to be filled with these so-called choragic monuments, and a street made through it was known as the "Street of Tripods."

After the end of the fourth century B.C. it was no longer possible to find private patrons to finance the production of the plays and the State had to provide the funds. By this time the contests must have lost much of that eager and wholesome rivalry that called forth the best powers of playwright, chorus, and actors. These tripod monuments date therefore from the period when the drama was at its best.

At the end of a street opposite the Arch of Hadrian there is still a small graceful structure, looking like a tiny round tower. In Turkish times this was known as

the "Lantern of Demosthenes," owing to its supposed resemblance to a Turkish lantern. The origin of the supposed connection with Demosthenes is lost. An inscription on the architrave of the south-east side shows that in reality it was a monument erected by one Lysicrates in commemoration of his victory as *choragus* in one of the Dionysiac festivals which took place 334-3 B.C. The size of the tripod has evidently determined the proportions of the whole building, which is made to carry the crowning feature as high as possible without allowing it to appear insignificant. The fluted Corinthian columns bearing the circular architrave and frieze seem naturally to suggest to the eye the slender horizontal lines of tripod with its shallow basin. One has only to imagine the tripod on the summit of the acanthus ornament that arises from the marble "thatch of laurel leaves" and at once there is a new satisfaction in the whole design. The acanthus ornament falls into place and the eye leaves off searching for an opening in the curved marble sides as the building changes from a dwarf temple into a fitting pedestal for the trophy.

We know from Pausanias that this building stood among many others, some of them containing masterpieces. It was therefore designed to hold its own by appropriateness and harmony rather than by any wealth of ornament. The tripods in low relief between the capitals and the frieze above are both strictly to the point. Dionysus is seated on a cliff, accompanied by his panther and attendant satyrs. He has encountered Tyrrhenian pirates who do not believe in his divinity and is changing them into dolphins. One of them may be seen leaping into the sea, already half a dolphin. Casts of this frieze are shown in the British Museum.

The building is of especial interest as the oldest example of Corinthian architecture extant. Standing in full view of the giant columns of the Olympieum

the contrast reveals the range of the Corinthian order to which both belong.

About 1660 the "Lantern" was built into the walls of a Capuchin convent and reserved by the monks as a circular study attached to their guest-chamber. Here Byron, Dodwell, Galt, and other travellers stayed when they came to Athens. There was no proper inn in the town and the hospitality of the monks was freely offered (see p. 241).

In the rock of the Acropolis overlooking the Dionysiac Theatre there are two natural caves. The one immediately above the theatre was adapted as a choragic monument by a certain Thrasyllus (320 B.C.) who must have been a man of original ideas. He walled up the mouth of the cave and set three Doric pilasters on the face of the wall. These supported an architrave which probably carried the emblematic tripod. An inscription recording the victory of Thrasyllus may be seen lying in front of the cave, though it is now broken. His son Thrasykles added two more inscriptions recording two more victories when he was president of the games fifty years later, and these also may be found lying near the spot. Either father or son crowned the edifice with the seated statue of Dionysus now in the British Museum. This monument of Thrasyllus was destroyed by the Turks when they besieged the Acropolis in 1826-7, but the spot is still conspicuous by reason of the two Corinthian columns which stand on the rock above the cave. These were also put up to support tripods and are examples of the more commonplace type of choragic monument. They remain a standing perplexity to the casual sight-seer. They suggest the remains of a temple, but the narrow ledge of rock on which they perch makes this out of the question. It is strange how many visitors fail to track them in the guide-books and come home saying, "But what are those two odd columns above

the theatre ?" The second cave is part of the great hospital-temple of Asklepios.

III

THE PRECINCT OF ASKLEPIOS

Perhaps you have lingered on the Acropolis till the blue-coated guardian warns you that the gates are closing. Darkness overtakes you as you descend the hill by the footpath on its south side, and glancing up for one last backward glimpse of the Acropolis your eye is caught by a golden star twinkling high up in the rock. This is the light in the shrine behind the monument of Thrasykles. A tiny light lower down burns before the picture of the Virgin in the cave where the healing spring of Asklepios rises. This is another example of the continuity of sacred sites. Where Asklepios used to work his miracles the Virgin now heals the sick and sends her blessings of prosperity and fruitfulness to the young couples who hang their wedding wreaths before her shrine.

Visited by daylight the little cave is plain enough. A spring of water wells up through the stone and flows round the cave in a rock-cut channel. Outside are the remains of the sanctuary of Asklepios, somewhat confused by the superposition of a Byzantine church, but worth careful study for the light they throw on this amazing cult, with its combination of faith-healing, open-air cure, and the attractions of a fashionable watering-place. It is not nearly so large nor so elaborate as the more famous Asklepieum at Epidaurus or that at Cos, but the main features are easily traced ; a small temple, an altar, and the long portico with a double row of columns. In this portico the patients lay in long rows along the marble pavement, and when night fell they watched for

the god and his attendant snakes to come and work miraculous cures. Possibly the cure was not always instantaneous, but the open-air life, the excitement of a possible apparition, the social intercourse, and the neighbourhood of the theatre would all combine to make an invalid inclined to continue his cure for a second season. Like Homburg and Aix-les-Bains, this sanctuary of Asklepios made a little spring the foundation for a great commerce in the pleasure-loving and pain-fearing instincts of mankind. There is a well-known passage in the "Plutus" of Aristophanes which delightfully satirizes the humbug that no doubt often accompanied the miraculous cures. The patient is none other than Plutus the god of wealth who arrives in Athens as a blind stranger. A servant who has gone with the sick man to the temple describes their adventures with much humour to his master's wife.

1 We hasted to the temple of the god
Leading the creature then the wretchedest,
But now the happiest beyond compare,
And the most fortunate in all the world ;
And, first we took him down to the seashore,
And washed him there.

This done we brought him to the holy place ;
And, after wafers and like offerings
Had on the altar solemnly been laid,
And cake burnt in the flame Hephæstus loves,
We put our Plutus properly to bed,
And each of us arranged his own straw couch.
. But I could get no sleep ;
I was excited by a porridge pot
Which stood a little distance from the head
Of an old lady, and I felt a strange
Unearthly longing to that pot to crawl.
As I looked up I caught sight of the priest
Snatching the cakes and the dried figs from off

^x I quote from the translation of Lord Justice Kennedy.

The holy table. Then he went the round
 Of all the altars questing on the chance
 That wafers had been left there. All he found
 He—consecrated—in a bag ; and I,
 Inferring for such act great piety,
 Rose up that pot of porridge to invade.
Wife. Most rash of men, did you not fear the god ?
Servant. Indeed I did, I feared that crown and all
 He'd come and reach the pot before myself.
 You see I'd learnt a lesson from the priest.
 Well, the old lady noticing some noise
 I made in moving to remove the pot,
 Upraised her hand ; I gave a hissing sound
 As a snake does and gripped it with my teeth.
 She without loss of time withdrew her hand,
 Rolled all her blankets round her and lay still.
 Much of the porridge I at once devoured
 And, when I'd had my fill, leapt back to bed . . .
 Then the god
 Came in a manner quite professional,
 Examining each patient in his turn.

He went and sat by the bedside
 Of little Plutus. First of all, he laid
 His hand upon the patient's head ; and next,
 With a clean towel wiped the eyelids' edge :
 Then Panacea with a purple veil
 Covered the head and face ; this done, the god
 Gave a low whistle, and there darted forth
 Out of the shrine two serpents of huge size.
 The pair crept quietly
 Under the veil, and as it seemed to me,
 Licked Plutus round the eyelids ; then, before
 You, madam, could toss off ten cups of wine,
 Plutus rose up from bed with sight restored.
 I clapped my hands together with delight,
 And went to rouse my master. Instantly
 Both god and serpents vanished in the shrine.
 You can't imagine how the patients there
 Kept on embracing Plutus. They sat up
 The livelong night until the day had dawned ;
 Whilst loud I sang the praises of the god
 Who had so swiftly made our Plutus see
 And Neoclides blinder than before.

Moving westward on slightly higher ground there is another portico and a row of chambers behind which are paved with small round pebbles. These are probably the priests' chambers. To the south of these again there is a polygonal wall, one stone of which bears the inscription HOPOΣ KPENEΣ —the boundary of the fountain. It marks the limits of the ancient precinct and also indicates that the cult of the spring may really be older than the cult of the god.

Asklepios is in Athens one of the new-comers whose worship seems to have been introduced towards the end of the fifth century. The scientific men of the day looked coldly on him and scoffed at the solemn cant of pet snakes and nocturnal apparitions. In time, however, they came to realize that his methods suited the needs of certain leisured classes of society, and the two schools of medicine worked together in the same kind of harmony as sometimes exists to-day between the family doctor and the professor of mental therapeutics.

An interesting suggestion has recently been made,¹ which may account for this change of attitude on the part of the followers of Hippocrates to their fellow-practitioners, the followers of Asklepios. It seems probable that the decline of Athens during the fourth and succeeding centuries was, among other causes, due to the invasion of malaria. At all events it is clear from the "Wasps" that fever was already prevalent in the time of Aristophanes, though it is hardly mentioned before. In malaria the orthodox practitioners found a foe against which they were powerless. Quinine was unknown to them and without quinine science was of little use. On the other hand the faith-healing methods of Asklepios gave the patient that mental stimulus which is undoubtedly beneficial, and it seems possible that some of the cures were of intermittent fever in its early stages.

¹ W. H. S. Jones, "Malaria and Greek History."

In the National Museum at Athens there are numerous stone tablets which had been set up by grateful patients in this precinct of Asklepios. The god, figured as a bearded man, appears on many of them, and he is usually accompanied by his daughter Hygiea and his snake. Sometimes the snake is shown without the god. The patient is often seated or reclining, and is represented as smaller than the healer. Sometimes a whole family is giving thanks and Asklepios also may be accompanied by a group of other divinities or priestly healers.

One relief, found in the cellar of a house at a little distance but probably belonging to this sanctuary, often attracts the attention of visitors to the museum. It is a long narrow stele with the figure of a snake curling upwards. At the head of the stele where the stone slightly widens is the sole of a sandal with the figure of a man engraved upon it. The sandal is quite realistic in representation, and the holes through which the straps would have passed are marked by deep cuttings. The figure is evidently the worshipping portrait of the donor, Silon. It remains open to conjecture whether he chose the sandal to show that he had come as a pilgrim from afar or to indicate that he had been cured of some disease in the feet. Another theory is that the donor had been saved by the sole of his sandal from the bite of a poisonous snake.

These and many other such stelæ may be studied in the Hall of Votive Reliefs in the National Museum. The site of the Asklepieum was afterwards built over. The Byzantine church which stood here has been removed, but this part of the hill is still rich in Byzantine remains. There are fragments of some really beautiful lintels and slabs. It is delightful to spend an afternoon among them with camera or pencil.

CHAPTER VII

THE AFTERGLOW: ATHENS UNDER THE ROMANS

I

PAUSANIAS IN THE PIRÆUS

IN fellowship with Theseus we first traversed the land approach to Athens. The sea route suggests another companion, dear garrulous Pausanias. As a travelling companion Pausanias is unrivalled. His knowledge of the antiquities and mythology of Greece gives him a fund of anecdote, while he is never too hurried to pause to read an inscription or to pick up crumbs of folk-lore from a passing native. When Pausanias visited Athens about 160 A.D. she was at the height of her outward splendour, though her political greatness was past. The buildings of the great Periclean age were still standing: to them had been added the colonnades and monuments given by members of the friendly Pergamene dynasty. Hadrian and Herodes Atticus were building on a larger and more elaborate scale than anything that had gone before. The great public works of these Romans had not all been completed, and since the interest of Pausanias was chiefly archæological, he passed lightly over all that which was to him mere modern architecture. He does not pretend to describe what were in his day

the "modern" buildings, but he occasionally mentions one or other while walking through the ancient town.

With Pausanias therefore we stand at the ship's prow moving swiftly towards Athens. We pass under the white columns of Poseidon's temple perched on the cliff at Sunium. Only a few years previously these heights had been seized by Attic slaves employed in the silver mines at Laurium. Pausanias points out the Laurium mines, but he does not allude to the strike—or rebellion as he would have termed it. This was still too recent history to be of much interest to him.

And now rounding the promontory of Cape Colonna, at last the features of the Athenian landscape detach themselves from the background of surrounding hills.

At first the Cephissian Plain is barred by Hymettus. Then as we round the shoulder of Hymettus the plain comes into view with Parnes on the left, while scarred Pentelicus closes the view behind.

And now the town itself glimmers in the distance, a mere indistinct whiteness among the broken lights and shadows of the plain. Then the craggy peak of Lycabettus becomes visible and from this point of view almost dwarfs the Acropolis, which rises immediately beneath it, no frowning sentinel hill, but a mere touch of brightness dominated by the higher crag. This is only the first impression. In Athens itself the Acropolis holds its own, and Lycabettus is banished to the background. In front of the town lies the open bay of Phalerum, and Pausanias reminds us how from this sloping beach Menestheus launched his ships for Troy. Now our boat rounds the rocky promontory of Munychia, revealing the natural advantages afforded by the double peninsula, with its fortified heights, the two almost land-locked harbours of Munychia and Zea, and the great sheltered inner harbour. This inner harbour was itself double, containing the military harbour of Cantharus and the

commercial harbour, the Piræus proper. Pausanias applauds the strategic insight of Themistocles, who saw that these advantages must at all costs be secured to the city. Finding it useless to try to persuade the Athenians to forsake their old dwellings and emigrate from Athens to the sea, he contented himself with fortifying the harbour and having the new town laid out on broad lines with open spaces and colonnades to attract those whom he could not coerce. Later the Athenians themselves built the long walls, thus, as it were, tying Athens and Piræus together, and making of the two a curious dumb-bell shaped city, a device which proved as unsatisfactory as compromises usually are.

The fortifications of Themistocles encircled the new town of Piræus and ran across the peninsula of Munychia, and at need could even shut the sea door. In the days of Pausanias the three harbour mouths were still guarded by strong moles finished with towers, and in time of war these towers could be connected by strong chains, thus entirely closing the harbour mouth. Later another fortification wall was built, following the line of the rocky coast. In the harbours of Munychia and Zea we catch a glimpse of the great ship-sheds lining the shore. Here the triremes were housed. Each shed was fifty or sixty feet in length, with a wooden roof resting on plain stone pillars. The high polygonal wall which formed the back of the building made, as it were, a secondary line of shore fortifications.

Remains of these sheds are still plainly visible in the harbours of Zea and Munychia. Excavations made in 1885 by the Greek Archæological Society show that in each shed a central pier of rock or masonry sloped down from the back wall to some distance under the sea, and was grooved in order to allow the vessel's keel to run along it. On either side the natural rock was cut away

in sloping lines down to the water, thus making a kind of natural support for the sides of the ship.

Passing the promontory of Acte, Pausanias points out the tomb of Themistocles, on a headland of rock, between the city he created and the sea he loved. Here Pausanias' galley would furl its sails and slowly row between the moles of the great harbour. By this time the lines of buildings in Piræus would be clearly visible; the fine rectangular plan of the city as it was laid out by Hippodamus, with three main routes running parallel to each other and connected by four cross streets, the midmost street of the three prolonged and merging in the road that leads to Athens between the long walls.

In the town were two large squares, and from the sea Pausanias would get a view of the stretch of white public buildings, throwing the reflections of their marble columns among the golden tints of the sailing craft which lay at anchor round the shore. First there were the long lines of the colonnades belonging to the granary and market-place, filled with a motley throng of merchants and sailors, a throng such as Euripides had in mind when he wrote for the chorus in Hippolytus :—

Hath there landed amid the loud
Hum of Piræus sailor-crowd
Some Cretan venturer weary-browed
Who beareth the queen some tiding?

Behind the colonnades rose the magnificent arsenal built about the same time as the ship-sheds (347–29 B.C.) and conceived in the same spirit. It was a long, narrow building, 400 feet long by 50 feet wide; the roof supported by two rows of columns which divide the building into three compartments. The central aisle was left clear for the passage of men and the handling of goods. The side aisles were divided into two stories; canvas, oars, and heavy fittings were stored below, the lighter ropes and tackle above.

No remains of this building can be seen to-day, but an inscription found in 1882 at the port of Munychia gives most precise details as to its construction.

Standing out among the lines of the low dwelling-houses, there rose the great temple to the "Saviour Zeus and Saviour Athena," where the pious sailor offered thanks for his safe return. On the right, on the heights of Munychia, was another temple sacred to "Munychian Artemis"; a smaller sanctuary to Aphrodite stood at the head of the little harbour of Cantharus (now marked by the custom-house), and somewhere on the northern side of the great harbour was another temple to the same sea-born goddess. With its five colonnades surrounding the water's edge, with the arsenal, the ship-sheds, the stately temples, and two theatres, this great harbour-city of the Piræus bade fair to outshine her Mediterranean rivals even in the days of Pausanias.

On disembarking, Pausanias did not follow the main street which led direct to Athens between the lines of the long walls, for this road would be uncomfortably crowded. There was no view, the roads were rutted and dirty, and the foot passenger was often in danger of finding himself squeezed against the wall in order to avoid the laden wagons passing up and down from the port. Pausanias therefore chose the more open road, and struck away to the left, entering Athens through the tombs outside the Dipylum Gate.

II

THE ROMAN TOWN

Roman Athens compared ill with the broad, geometrical streets of the Piræus. "The streets are nothing but miserable old lanes, the houses mean, with a few better

ones among them," so wrote a traveller who visited Athens in the first century B.C., and even in the time of Pausanias the same description held good, though the Romans had done their best to remedy the town's most obvious defects.

The aqueduct, begun by Hadrian and finished by his successor, brought fresh water from Pentelicus to Athens. It follows the same line as the modern one, starting near Cephissia and ending on the south-west slope of Lycabettus. In the course of ages the ancient aqueduct was freely tapped by those whose gardens lay along the line of its route, and the morality of the twentieth century is not always proof against the same temptation. The ancient cistern, which was no doubt open, occupied the same site above the city as the modern one, which is fortunately covered. It stands on a shady platform high above the town, with a view of the Acropolis, Ægina, and the mountains of the Peloponnese. Here the townspeople still crowd on the Feast of the Epiphany to see the Archbishop in full canonicals bless the water and throw upon it the holy cross.

The Romans also gave Athens a new market-place, more spacious and less straggling than its predecessor. It lies further east of the Acropolis than did the old market. In fact the whole current of city life seems in Roman times to have set eastward, and the new suburb of Hadrian lay over towards the Ilissus. This change of fashion leading the business and pleasure of the town from one district to another is the feature that distinguishes our Western towns from those of the unchanging Orient. In Western towns when the old quarters become cramped or out of fashion, new dealers set up their shops in conspicuous spots on the outskirts of the old centres, and the stream of trade is slowly diverted from its course. In Eastern towns the process is reversed, and it is the neighbourhood of the oldest

rather than of the newest dealer that is most sought after. In Roman times Athens belonged to the Western world. That touch of the East which hangs about her to-day does not date further back than her Turkish conquerors. It is strange to hear an Athenian now talk of "going to Europe," tacitly assuming that he is in some sense an Asiatic. But this is a digression and has taken us from that prince of digressors, Pausanias himself.

The new Roman market-place was entered on the west by a large gateway, of which four Doric columns with architrave and pediment are still in place. An inscription on the architrave shows that the gate was dedicated to Athena Archegetis (Athena the Foundress), while a second inscription, which has now vanished, showed that the building dated from the middle of the first century B.C. At a distance of about six feet inside these columns, there was a wall containing the gates to which this large structure was a portico. There would probably be a large gate for wheeled vehicles opposite the wide space between the columns with smaller postern gates on either side. Remains of one of these posterns may still be seen at the south corner, where a complete anta still supports the architrave, and opposite to it is the upright jamb of a door. Here there is a long inscription bearing the name of the Emperor Hadrian. It gives the regulations for the sale of oil in the market-place.

At the eastern end of the market-place another gate has been found. This is not placed in an exact line with the gate of the Foundress Athena, but lies somewhat to the south. From this it has been assumed that the market-place had more than one gate at either end. We may picture a large open court, paved with flags and surrounded by an Ionic colonnade; warehouses and shops behind. Remains of these shops and stores can still be seen on the wall that bounds the market-place to the east. Even the names of the merchants have survived

cut on the columns or on the pavement before their doors. Four holes of different sizes sunk in the floor of this pavement are clearly the measures of capacity used by the merchants. Two columns on either side of these holes have the linear measure carefully graved upon them. Here we have the Greek $\pi\eta\chi\upsilon\varsigma$, which was originally measured from the elbow to the first joints of the fingers, and which is still the standard measure in use throughout Greece.

Explorers of some future age excavating the remains of Piccadilly Circus may similarly find the names of great merchants over their doors and the yard measure marked on the counter. It is true that the Roman shops were mere sheds compared with London's palatial stores, yet in its own day the Roman market had a reputation for architectural distinction. Its spaciousness and regularity of outline was a great improvement on the old haphazard Athenian agora.

Overlooking the market and immediately outside of it stands the Clock Tower of Andronicus, famous as the "Tower of the Winds." The octagonal marble tower, with its roof of the same material gently sloping up to the centre, pleasantly closes the perspective of the long modern street that now leads up to it, but on a closer view the detail is disappointing. Heavy limbs and lifeless draperies fill the panels of the frieze in a clumsy attempt to make the human figure conform to the lines of a festoon. Had the frieze been filled with simple perpendicular lines of fluting, had it even been left bare, the building would have gained a dignity that is now lacking. Nor can the beauty of the building have been enhanced by the ingenious figure of a bronze Triton, who acted as weathercock on the tower and pointed with his stick to the figure facing the quarter from which the wind was blowing. But though their absence might improve the appearance of the tower, I doubt if there is

any lover of Athens who could wish away these quaint personifications of the winds in the frieze. They seem for so many centuries to have linked the dwellers in the wind-swept city into one bond of brotherhood. The winds that haunt the poems and legends of ancient Greece are still vivid realities to the modern Athenian, and the attributes on the tower represent correctly enough their latter-day reputations.

First come the three winter winds, Skiron, Boreas, and Kaikias. Skiron bears a brazier for cold days. He is the North West Wind. Boreas, who faces Æolus Street, is clad in thick garments and blows a horn. He is the strong North Wind who sweeps noisily down through the pass of Deceleia and comes to Athens from the snowy hill-tops of Eubœa. He brings the cold, clear days characteristic of the Athenian winter, and the deceitful blue of his skies has tempted out many a victim since the days of Oreithyia. Simonides sings: "The North Wind rushing from Thrace covered the flanks of Olympus with snow and nipped the spirits of thinly-clad men." But Boreas has his kindly as well as his dangerous aspect. In the time of the Persian War, "It is said that the Athenians had called upon Boreas to aid the Greeks, on account of a fresh oracle which they had received, ordering them to ask help from their son-in-law. For Boreas, according to Greek tradition, had married a woman of Attica—*i.e.* Oreithya, daughter of Erechtheus," and therefore might be counted a son-in-law of Athens. Poets and painters show him sweeping his bride away as she gathers the spring flowers.

Modern Athenians may have forgotten to claim kinship with Boreas, but they have not forgotten to look to him as their deliverer. He is the health wind, the germ-destroyer, the invigorator. During an epidemic of smallpox we saw the picture of St. Barbara carried in full procession round the outskirts of the city on

St. Barbara's day, and when on the morrow a strong north wind sprang up, we heard a devout Greek exclaim, "Praise the Lord, St. Barbara has sent Boreas to help us."

The North East Wind, Kaikias, is the evil genius of the Athenian climate. He is the "pneumonia wind," and his voice tells of the frozen tracts of Siberia over which he passed long before he rushed through the gap in the hills between Hymettus and Pentelicus. He holds a dish of pellets which have variously been called olives or hailstones. The first interpretation is the older one, but the last seems the more probable. Apeliotes, the East Wind, comes next. He is the wind of spring, bringing fruit and flowers. Euros, the South East Wind, carries the storm up from Hymettus, wrapping it in clouds as his own arm is wrapped in drapery. There is an Italian proverb prophesying rain "when the Madman puts on his cap. *Monte Matto* is the Italian corruption of Hymettus, and this becomes in familiar speech "*Il Matto*" (The Madman). The cap is the sullen bar of cloud hiding the peak. The South Wind, *Notos*, seems in Roman times to have had a rainy reputation. To-day he is less of a rain wind than Euros his companion, and the two might well exchange the emblems of cloak and water-jar. *Notos* to-day often brings clouded skies and an atmosphere heavy with desert dust. Next comes *Lips*, the sailors' wind, with the prow of a ship as his emblem, and after him the bountiful *Zephyros* with flowers. The two winds are both beloved of poets. Leonidas of Tarentum mingles their attributes in one short song: "Now is the season of sailing; for already the chattering swallow is come, and the gracious West Wind; the meadows flower, and the sea tossed up with waves and rough blasts has sunk to silence. Weigh thine anchors and unloose thine hawsers, oh mariner! and sail with all thy canvas set: this I, Priapus of the harbour, bid thee,

oh man ! that thou mayest sail forth to all thy trafficking."

On each face of the tower, as well as the figure of the wind, there was also a sundial. Inside was the celebrated water clock of Andronicus. Its mechanism has never been fully explained. The water that worked it was brought from the spring Clepsydra by means of an aqueduct, the remains of which may still be seen. Its value in that busy market-place is self-evident. Before it was placed there, there must have been many cloudy days when the citizens measured the flight of time chiefly by their appetites. We saw in the last chapter how Dioclates, having no clock, mistook moonlight for dawn, and found himself roaming at night in the neighbourhood of the Dionysiac Theatre.

A few paces from the Clock Tower is the famous Library of Hadrian. Its north portico or stoa, now facing on to the little Bazaar behind Hermes Street, has long been a conspicuous object, yet it is only within quite recent years that archæologists have ventured to exchange the well-known non-committal name, "Stoa of Hadrian," for the more definite term now employed. In 1886 the site was excavated by the Greek Archæological Society, revealing a ground-plan much complicated by later Byzantine buildings. Around the open court remains were found of a portico of a hundred columns. This was, however, an incomplete clue to its identification, since Pausanias mentions that Hadrian gave both his Gymnasium and his Library one hundred columns. Very few gymnasia of this period are known, and until 1905 there was no library with which Hadrian's building could be compared. In that year, however, the Austrian excavations at Ephesus laid bare the remains of a Roman library to which this building bears so strong a general resemblance that there is no longer room for doubt that this is indeed Hadrian's Library, thus vindicating the

conclusion at which Mr. Frazer and other archæologists had already arrived on independent grounds.

The whole ground-plan of Hadrian's Library has [not yet been uncovered, but thanks to the description of Pausanius, it is possible to identify the large central hall in which under a gilded roof the books were stored and around it an open courtyard enclosed by the famous colonnade. The interior of the building is reached from the upper end of Æolus Street. It is fenced in by iron railings, and, contrary to the usual custom of the Greek Archæological Society, the gate into the enclosure is locked. There are, however, twenty small boys always ready to run for the key, and on passing in one finds a high wall of dark poros stone. This seems to be the outside wall of a row of five chambers outside the colonnade, but following the same lines. On the right there is some plain masonry which seems to have formed the back wall of the stoa, and in front is a marble wall of good Roman work which formed the north-eastern corner of the original hall and was retained as the short wall of a northern transept when the Christians built their church there. To see the front of the building one must pass to the old bazaar at the foot of Athena Street, where the Corinthian columns rise oddly from the scene of oriental confusion below. These columns, which still bear the name "Stoa of Hadrian," are all that is left in the west front of the Library. The two standing more in advance of the others are the two from the north side of the porch. The seven in a row beyond form the northern half of the western wall. These are plain, while those of the porch are fluted. All carry Corinthian capitals. Foundations still remain of the bases of the three columns which completed the front of the portico and also of the seven bases of the columns on the south side of the porch answering to those still standing on the north. The original building had therefore a façade with a row of



HADRIAN'S LIBRARY IN TURKISH TIMES



HADRIAN'S LIBRARY AS IT IS TO-DAY

fourteen columns and a porch with a front of seven columns.

The love of these large open porticoes is as characteristic of Athenian life in the Roman as in the Hellenistic age. For the ruler who wished to gain popularity there was no surer way to the hearts of the citizens than the gift of a new public colonnade. At the time that Pausanias visited Athens the number of these colonnades was out of all proportion to the size of the town. The Hellenic porticoes were still standing. The Hellenistic or later Greek period had added those built by Eumenes and Attalus, and the Roman period gave the so-called Portico of the Giants, the portico of Hadrian's Library, and probably another outside his Gymnasium. There was therefore no quarter of the town without its sunny promenade sheltered from the weather and dry underfoot. Of these porticoes or *stoæ* there were always two distinct types; the first, such as the large one built by Attalus, was a centre for business with shops at the back of the open colonnade and dwellings for the store-keepers above; the second, such as that built by Eumenes, was an open promenade with no shops or dwellings attached. The one was the resort of buyers and sellers, the second the haunt of philosophers and beggars. In this matter our civilization still seems to lag behind the Greek and the Roman world. Our climate is far worse than theirs, yet Chester is almost the only town in the kingdom that protects its sidewalks from the sun and rain.

Considering the colonnades in their chronological order, the Stoa of Eumenes comes first. It now runs from the Theatre of Dionysus to the Music Hall of Herodes; in the days when it was built, however, there was no great Music Hall. The latter, though it added to the significance and usefulness of the broad double colonnade, must also have encroached on its western end. This colonnade was placed in a most popular spot. After the

building of the Music Hall it formed a covered way from that building to the Theatre. It faced south, it was sheltered from the east and west, and from its south end it overlooked the Gulf of Ægina. Here the sun-loving Athenians came to take their morning or evening stroll, and here also the audience in the Dionysiac Theatre could hasten for shelter when a tragedy or cock-fight was interrupted by a sudden storm. To-day all that remains is a portion of pavement and sidewalk, foundations of columns and the arches of the back wall built against the hill. These arches that now seem the distinguishing feature of the Stoa of Eumenes, have only become visible since its destruction. Originally they were covered by a wall of which the lower half was marble and the upper half of limestone. Eumenes II, the giver of this portico, was King of Pergamon in the first half of the second century B.C. His father Attalus I had already shown his friendship to Athens by presenting the town with a series of recumbent statues which lay on the South wall of the Acropolis above the Dionysiac Theatre. After the death of Eumenes his son Attalus II (159-38 B.C.) continued the family tradition and won the gratitude of the Athenians by giving them another portico. This was the well-known Stoa of Attalus, which stood in the heart of the city to the East of the Hellenic Agora. Its marble pavement, its two sidewalks, and the foundations of its colonnade may still be seen. It is also possible to make out something of the shops at the back of the colonnade. The lower and upper stories were connected by means of an open staircase in the South wall. The upper story also had a double line of columns answering to the colonnade below, with the addition of a balustrade of marble for the sake of safety.

Westward of the Stoa of Attalus was another portico known as the Stoa of the Giants, which was built or rebuilt in Roman times. Four bases standing in a row

are surmounted by fragments of colossal figures from which the name has been given to it. Compared with the other porticoes, this is small and of little interest, worthy of notice only as adding one more type to the list of Athenian stoæ. Pausanias as he strolled through Athens may have enjoyed the new colonnades. No doubt he often paused in their shade while noting his observations on pocket-tablets at the end of a morning's sightseeing.

On the Acropolis itself there are remains of only one Roman building, the little temple to Rome and Augustus, which stands just outside the east side of the Parthenon. An inscription, which may still be seen on the broken fragments of the epistyle, tells us that this temple was set up by the people of Athens to the goddess Rome and to the god Cæsar. It must have been a graceful little building with its round cella and the nine Ionic columns encircling it, but its blatantly servile inscription suggests too poignant a contrast between its own builders and those of the Parthenon on whose threshold it stands.

These Roman buildings are all sufficiently Greek in style not to seem out of place in Athens. The Roman era has, however, left one trophy of aggressive ugliness. The Philopappus monument stands on the Mouseium Hill opposite the Acropolis. It has a splendid position and a special interest, for it was set up to the last recorded male descendant of the Seleucid dynasty. These kings of Asia Minor had been for many generations the representatives and champions of Hellenism in the Oriental world. The monument commemorates Philopappus in his triple character of Asiatic king, Roman consul, and Athenian citizen. The curved façade has two stories, and was probably placed at the end of an oblong hall. In the upper story were set three statues divided by Corinthian pilasters. Inscriptions show that the central statue represented Gaius Julius

Philopappus with a royal Seleucid ancestor on either hand. The building is thus dated approximately to the year A.D. 115. In the lower story was a relief showing Philopappus as consul driving a car with four horses. When new it must have been even more unsightly than it is to-day—the “Albert Memorial” of Athens.

III

HADRIAN'S NEW SUBURB

At the foot of the fashionable modern boulevard called after the Queen Amalia there stands a somewhat purposeless and not very beautiful yellow gateway known as the Arch of Hadrian. There is nothing remarkable in its architecture, history, or position. A shallow arch supports a colonnade of four columns in late Corinthian style. It does not seem to have been a triumphal arch, though there is some reminiscence of the arches in the Roman Forum. The orientation shows that it could not have served as an entrance to the enclosure of the great temple behind. Probably it was erected merely to mark the site of an earlier gate when the town wall which once stood here was destroyed. Although it bears the name of Hadrian, it seems to date from a slightly later period. Driving along any Greek road to-day the traveller may see by the roadside many structures as pretentious and less forgivable than this—magnificent gateways holding no gate and unsupported by walls. For even if it has no beauty this so-called Arch of Hadrian has a real significance. It was put there to mark the boundary between the old town and the new. On the architrave words are carved. On the side towards the Acropolis, “*This is Athens the former city of Theseus,*” and on the other side, “*This is the city of Hadrian and not the city of Theseus.*”

This arch therefore marked not only the passage from

Hellenic to Roman Athens. It also in a certain sense recorded the entrance to a new period—the late afternoon of Athenian glory when the city was content to shine in reflected light and to flourish as the petted favourite of a great empire ; when the foreign ruler Hadrian was not afraid to challenge comparison with Theseus himself.

In the eyes of its own generation, the city of Hadrian probably outshone its forerunner. The Roman buildings were planned on a more colossal scale, and the rapid succession of public works raised by Hadrian and Herodes Atticus dominated the imagination of the Athenians who by now were proud to call themselves Roman citizens. The glory of Rome would be increased by the remembrance that these buildings were not, like those of the Acropolis, national achievements of a nation, but the mere caprice of an individual whose humour was so to adorn Athens, one of the many provincial capitals of his empire. Hadrian gave the city every kind of building : temples, a library, a gymnasium, baths, and an aqueduct. He was rewarded by the adulation of all society : priests, philosophers, athletes, and idlers. Pausanias found the city overdone with statues of the great emperor. The space outside the Olympieum was, he says, completely filled with his image, “for every city presented a portrait-statue of the Emperor Hadrian, while the Athenians have overtopped all the rest by setting up the remarkable colossus behind the temple.” He mentions also a statue near the entrance to the Parthenon and tells us that in the Agora there was another dedicated to him as “Hadrian the Liberator.” This same title appears in the inscription on the chair reserved for his priest in the theatre, and it was well-deserved. Like other provinces of the Empire, Attica had been grossly overtaxed. Hadrian remitted her arrears of taxation and gave provincials equal legal rights with Roman citizens.

Greatest of all the works of Hadrian was the temple itself, the vast building to Olympian Zeus, in this new quarter. It stood well out of the town, in full view of the Acropolis and the sea, and with the well-watered groves of the Ilissus around it, and occupied a site which from earliest times had been marked out for a sanctuary. The emperor was in fact merely accomplishing a work which had been conceived and partly executed at two, if not three, earlier periods.

Tradition says that this was the spot chosen by Deucalion for a sanctuary dedicated to Zeus after the waters of the great flood had subsided. "Here there is an opening in the ground about a cubit wide, where they say that after the flood in the times of Deucalion the water ran away ; and every year there is thrown into it a cake of meal mixed with honey."

Mr. Penrose, who excavated this site in 1885, thought he discovered traces of this temple in a rough wall of hard limestone below the foundations of the standing columns. Later authorities have, however, questioned this.

The second temple on this spot dates from the time of Peisistratus, and though his dynasty was unable to complete the immense work that he had planned, some of the Doric columns remained standing through after centuries. A few drums of poros stone are all that to-day remain of this sixth-century temple of Peisistratus. They are easily distinguishable from the larger marble drums of Hadrian's time. Between this building and that of Hadrian a third attempt was made to finish the temple. In the second century B.C. the Syrian Antiochus Epiphanes began to build here. His architect was a Roman named Cossutius, and the temple was to have been in the Corinthian style. Sulla carried off some of its columns to adorn the Capitoline temple at Rome. Mr. Penrose has guessed that these must have been the

marble monoliths of the inner temple, as it would have been impossible to remove the outer columns without damaging their delicate flutings. About A.D. 130 Hadrian brought the long-interrupted work to completion. When finished it was one of the largest Greek temples in the world, measuring 354 feet in length and 135 feet in breadth along the upper step. On the narrow ends (east and west) it had a triple row of eight Corinthian columns, while the sides facing north and south had a double row of twenty. The group now to be seen are those belonging to the south-east angle of the temple, while the isolated couple belong to the inner row of the south side.

It is not easy for a building of such colossal proportions to gain its true effect. It must be balanced by a spacious sweep of ground below, and spectators must be able to stand at a distance to take in the whole at a glance. Hadrian therefore enlarged the natural platform on which the temple stood, carrying it as far as the borders of the Ilissus, where it was supported by a retaining wall, parts of which are still visible.

This district round the Ilissus which had once seemed so lonely that the Athenian women feared to draw water from the spring, now became the popular quarter of the city. To-day, in the gardens of the Royal Palace, or among the oleanders of the newly-planted Zappeion garden, we come unawares upon mosaic pavements and low walls, the remains of the many baths and villas which sprang up in this district during the Roman occupation. Then, as now, the happy Athenians came here to spend the afternoons of early summer. Then, as now, the purple of Ægina and the fainter mauve of Trœzen shone jewel-like behind the temple, while the pervading blue of sea and sky made then a rare background for those honorary statues to the emperor of which Pausanias speaks. Here the loungers sat and

gazed at the glories of the great temple, perfect at last, after centuries of incompleteness. Perhaps they told each other of the three attempts to finish the building, praising Hadrian for its final success. One almost hears the muttered comments of the saturnine philosopher sitting by himself in a corner, who grumbles that the work of one tyrant has been completed by another, and that Hadrian's velvet glove has subverted the liberties of the Athenian people more effectually than the dynasty of Peisistratus.

Hadrian's lead was soon followed by a private citizen, Herodes Atticus, who at the time of Pausanias' visit was still beautifying the new suburb of the city. Elated by his own victory in the Panathenaic games, he promised his countrymen that their next contest should be held in a marble building. He kept his word, and at the end of the four years the old stadium on the further side of the Ilissus was nearly doubled in size and was completely overlaid with marble. Its length was now 670 feet, its breadth 109 feet. The tiers of marble benches rising one above the other were able to seat over fifty thousand spectators. Its entrance was at the end nearest the city, and excavations made in 1904 have revealed the foundations of splendid Propylæa. A Herm which originally stood at the winning-post has also been discovered, and stands once more in the stadium. The old starting-point seems to have been at the end of the building nearest the town and slightly outside the last of the spectators' seats, an arrangement peculiar to this stadium. A temple to Fortune on one of the low hills overlooking the stadium and a marble bridge across the Ilissus seem to have been gifts from the same generous hand. No traces of the temple or bridge have yet been found, though both are described by travellers in the eighteenth century. The obvious signs of lime-kilns on the low hills show only too clearly the reason for the

rapid disappearance of marble from this region. There can be little doubt that for many centuries the manufacture of lime has been carried on in Athens at the expense of her ancient buildings. The district is full of limestone, but as long as marble remained on the surface it was easier to obtain lime from this than to quarry it from the hill-side. After many centuries of desolation, a private individual once more volunteered to cover the stadium with marble, and the new building now glistens as freshly for our generation as in the days when Pausanias saw it. The Olympian games are also being revived, and this southern suburb of the city is as popular in the days of the new kingdom as it was when favoured by emperor and philosopher.

One other building was set up by Herodes Atticus. This was the great Odeum or Music Hall, which he gave to the Athenian people in memory of his wife Regilla. Set close under the south side of the Acropolis, it is still a striking piece of architecture with its three tiers of arches, and owing to its sheltered position it has suffered less than the other ancient monuments of Athens. Herodes, who loved to do all things lavishly, gave to his concert hall a cedar roof, which soon became famous. There was a mosaic floor and the seats were of marble. The buildings show the personality of this magnificent philosopher-citizen; proud of his city, proud of his own accomplishments, a man of culture and refinement, and not untainted by the love of display that was already undermining the spirit of the Roman Empire. We know him also as an affectionate husband and a kind patron. We have a glimpse of him in his country house at Cephissia (p. 332), with the little group of students and poets that he had gathered round him. To the end of his days that sweet moment of victory in the stadium seems to have remained the great memory of his life, and it was by the stadium that he desired to be buried. In

January, 1904, a tomb was opened on the little hill east of the stadium. It was naturally suggested that this tomb might be that of Herodes. Unfortunately, however, the grave had been plundered and no direct evidence was obtainable beyond the fact that the plain marble sarcophagus seems by its workmanship to belong to his century.

IV

A ROMAN CARGO

Popular though Athens was among the Romans, their feeling for her did not deter them from carrying off a goodly harvest of marble and bronze to adorn their own homes in Italy. The Roman museums to-day are full of treasures captured in true Morosini-Elgin fashion. Thus a taste for such things was created, and to meet it there grew up in Athens a school of sculptors who turned out clever copies of older work, not forgeries, but reminiscences of Archaic, Hellenic, and Hellenistic types. In the same way the Athenian craftsman to-day models charming figurines breathing the very spirit of the old Tanagra terra-cottas.

These facts have been emphasized within recent years by the discovery of two Roman vessels with their cargoes of statuary found by divers on the sea-bottom. One of these was wrecked on the coast of Carthage. Its contents, which are slowly being brought to the surface, are now housed in the Museum at Tunis. The other wreck, accidentally discovered in 1900 by sponge-fishers off the Island of Anticythera (Cerigotto), has yielded a few marbles and a rich store of bronzes for the National Museum at Athens. When first these fragments were brought to the Museum they were in a pitiful condition. To visit them in the Mending Room or ranged under the long portico outside the Museum was to be reminded



BRONZE STATUE FROM ANTICYTHERA

of a leper hospital. Such portions as had been buried in the sand were in fairly good preservation, but the parts that had remained exposed were corroded by the action of the sea and in some cases had been entirely destroyed. The magnificent bronze Hermes that now confronts us at the end of the sculpture gallery was found shattered in a dozen pieces.

The work of restoration was most difficult, but it has been carried out with great care and great success by M. Cavvadias, late Ephor-General of Antiquities, and his colleague, M. Staïs. The shipwrecked mariners fished up from the bottom of the sea are now one of the most interesting features of the Museum. Where possible, missing parts have been renewed, but when there was no indication as to the shape of a missing limb no attempt has been made to hide the mutilation.

When first the Hermes was being put together his eager, compelling gaze, outstretched arm, and graceful poise suggested the hope that he might prove to be a masterpiece of the fifth or fourth century. But the critics stepped in, and we are now told that this is but another copy for the Roman market, no doubt inspired by recollections of Praxiteles and his Olympian Hermes. The name Hermes for this bronze statue is, of course, quite arbitrary. He has also been identified as Paris with the apple and Perseus with the head of Medusa.

Another fragment in this collection, a work of extraordinary interest and charm, is the bronze head of an oldish man, rugged and thought-worn. When first found the metal had oxidized and corroded, so that the features were coarsened and the head seemed flat and shapeless, and accordingly it was then known as the Head of a Boxer. Careful cleaning and restoration have entirely changed its character, and it is now known as the Head of a Philosopher. The shaggy hair, deep eye-sockets, and furrowed brow make a haunting bit of

portraiture. The eyes that for twenty centuries gazed on the strange world of the sea-bottom still gaze at us, not satisfied for all their curious knowledge, showing still the hungry glance of the seeker.

Utterly different in spirit, though charming enough in its own way, is "The Crouching Boy," a life-size figure in veined grey marble with no pretension to rank as a first-class work. The pose is unusual and has not yet been satisfactorily explained. The boy crouches on the right knee, his left arm upraised. The gentle, playful expression on his face suggests a game of hide-and-seek or mimic warfare rather than any kind of struggle. He might be stooping to gather an arrow or mark the length of a shot, holding his hand up to warn a companion. This statue and other marble fragments have the marble supports which are usually chiselled away, still left in place, a proof that they are fresh from the workshop, not "wrenched from their pedestals."

Two bronze statuettes confirm this same impression. They are the work of artists who were inspired by the traditions of pure Greek art, but who worked with an eye to the Roman market. The sculptor knew that his work was not intended to awake any religious sentiment. It was to be one among many objects of art in the home of a cultivated Roman citizen and its Attic flavour was to attract the attention of connoisseurs. Mr. Frost, in his discussion of these statues,¹ points out that if this is the case it is no longer possible to identify this wreck off the island of Anticythera with that vessel of Sulla's which Lucian mentions as having sailed from Piræus carrying one of the most famous pictures by Zeuxis and having been shipwrecked somewhere off Cape Malea. A conqueror with the spoils of a conquered city under his hand would not be likely to go to the ateliers of the craftsmen for his trophies.

¹ *Hellenic Journal*, 1903.



MARBLE STATUE FROM ANTICYTHERA

This cargo therefore was composed, not of exceptional works of art, but of the average production of Athenian craftsmen in Roman times. And yet how beautiful they are ! lacking no doubt in perfect harmony of line and precision of detail, but still full of the old grace. The afterglow of Greek glory was slow to fade.

CHAPTER VIII

THE BYZANTINE CHURCHES OF ATTICA

ONE of the most charming features of Attica is the number of Byzantine churches appearing in odd unexpected places. At the end of a fashionable street, in the middle of a modern square, next door to a railway-station, under the shadow of the Acropolis Hill, in any place and at any time one may come upon one of these tiny golden buildings (a harmony of soft colours and dark tiled domes), its foundations sunk some feet beneath the level of the modern road. It is the same in the country districts. A fold in the barren hill-side discloses the site of some rich old monastery with its vaulted church : sometimes even without any monastery on an open moor or windy hill-top there stands a deserted church, its frescoes green with mould.

The churches of Attica fall naturally into two distinct groups : the larger ones which are more or less quadrilateral, belong to the basilica type. The smaller and more numerous churches, built in the shape of a cross, are known as the cruciform type. In these the nave, chancel, and transepts are higher than the other parts of the building, and give the appearance of a Latin cross. Sometimes the length of the transepts



CHURCH OF THE SAINTS THEODORE, ATHENS



MONASTERY CHURCH OF DAPHNI

north and south corresponds to the length of the church east and west, thus retaining the proportions of the greek cross. Each of these arms is usually finished by a tiled cupola, and over the centre of the church, where the arms meet, a large cupola is raised on a higher drum, giving it a marked predominance. The rectangular spaces between the arms and the body of the church are often filled in by vaults or apses. Such a church becomes a group of swelling curves which lead the eye upward to the central dome that rests on its slender drum.

In the basilica group the cross transepts are not indicated by difference in roof-level. The central space is surmounted by a single dome of rather wide proportions. This rests on a low drum that does not rise much above the level of the roof. The narthex, which was originally the porch for the reception of those not yet admitted to church-membership, is now an extension of the nave. The effect of these churches is less slender and graceful than those of the cruciform group. Their massive proportions make them suitable for more important buildings, such as the large monasteries of Daphni and Daou. The illustration (Plate 10) gives the contrast between the two types.

As regards ornament no two churches are alike. The same motives are found but their application is different in each case. The church at Daphni was the only one wealthy enough to cover its interior wall surface with mosaic designs, and nothing can compare with the rich haphazard collection of sculpture in the outside walls of the old Metropolis Church at Athens. Yet among the smaller churches each has its own piece of special decoration, fresco or carving or brickwork, just as each part of the church had its own particular fragment of dogma or sacred history assigned to it. The walls are generally made of yellow stone, ornamented with red

bricks, and the domes are covered with dark tiles. The bricks were often placed so as to form the sacred initials of Christ's name, as is seen in the Alpha and Omega frieze which runs round the Church of Saint Nicodemus.

In towns where there were large congregations of Christians the wide spaces of the basilica were retained in the interior, as, for instance, in the great Church of Saint Sophia at Constantinople. In Athens there was no need for vast interiors. All that the worshippers wanted was a compact building to act as a baptistery or as the gathering-place for a small congregation. The churches of Greece are usually distinguished by their small proportions and by their wealth of symbolism in design and ornament.

The Church of Saint Nicodemus, which is now used for the Russian service, stands almost next door to the modern English church, and is a good example of the brick and mortar work which the Byzantine architects knew so well how to manage. Instead of the heavy stone lintels and columns with arches of concrete that had characterized the old basilicas, these Byzantine churches, built with brick and mortar, gained a new freedom in soaring vaulted spaces of dome and cupola. The red bricks that were used decoratively divided the courses of stone on the lower walls of the church, and on the higher levels broke into symbolic devices.

The plan of this Church of Saint Nicodemus is much the same as that of Daphni. The one important difference is that a woman's gallery is here placed over the narthex and lower sides. At Daphni, a monastery church, no gallery for women was needed. Diehl admires the gallery from the architectural point of view. It allows the height of the vaults to be proportioned to their size, while the inner walls under the gallery are furnished with an arcade. Millet places the date of this

building before the middle of the eleventh century. It is the only "city church" belonging to the larger group. The other churches of this type are found attached to wealthy monasteries in the country. If a large church were wanted in Athens itself, it was always easy to convert an old temple into a Christian church. Thus the Parthenon was used as the Church of Our Lady, and the Temple of Theseus became the Church of Saint George. Of the paintings on the interior of the Parthenon enough remains to suggest in what strange guise the Christian artists made the heathen shrine conform to Byzantine models. There may once have been other large Byzantine churches in Athens, but if so they are among those that have been destroyed.

The monasteries of Attica lurk in adorable hiding-places. Fertility and seclusion were the points to be looked for in choosing a site. A well-watered valley was the most desirable situation, provided it were well hidden from the sea. The holy Brothers lived in constant dread of pirates, and with good reason. The ruined monastery of Daou is only just within sight of the blue water, yet it fell a prey to a band of sea-robbers in the eighteenth century and has never been rebuilt. If piracy was rife even so late as the eighteenth century, it had been still worse throughout the so-called Dark Ages. The final isolation of Athens was due in no small measure to the fact that the rocky headlands of the Ægean were known as the haunt of corsairs.

The Monastery Church of Daou is an interesting building in a lovable spot. An hour's drive along the Marathon Road lies the little *khan* of Pikermi, and from this point a footpath leads through woods and up sloping hill-sides to a grove of noble plane-trees. Here is a ruined monastery of the fourteenth or fifteenth century, and around it are the olives and fields that the Brothers once cultivated. Queen Amalia liked to

drive out here, and often had her tent pitched under the plane-trees for her midday siesta. It is strange that modern picnic parties do not follow her steps.

The plan of the church seems to have been somewhat unusual. Its central part had a seven-sided dome with a twelve-sided cupola; four smaller cupolas finished the corners, and these with a small narthex at the south and an apse at the north end completed the compact oblong building. Later—perhaps early in the seventeenth century—an outer narthex was added at the south or seaward end. This is of great strength, considerably higher than the rest of the building, and stands as though spreading out its arms to protect the little church that nestles behind it. When the monks were driven from Daou they sought refuge at *Mendeli*, a monastery among the pines on the lower slopes of Pentelicus. Here a small Brotherhood still makes the traveller welcome. The situation is as beautiful as that of Daou, though without the glimpse of treacherous blue sea that cost them once so dear. It is the richest monastic establishment in Attica, and it was the only one to retain its individual privileges when the other monasteries of Attica were put under the jurisdiction of the Archbishop of Athens (1702-7). Here again there are the thriving plane-trees and the clear bubbling spring that make a Byzantine monastery an oasis of delight on a hot day.

The Assomatos or Monastery of the Holy Angels (literally the "disembodied ones") is a humbler foundation on the outskirts of Athens, on the slopes of Lycabettus. The church has been renovated, and there is little Byzantine work to be seen. A few Brothers still live in the shady court that surrounds it and lead a life of passive benevolence. The Government has decreed that the foundation must lapse on the death of the present Brotherhood, so no new Brothers are enrolled. The

old inhabitants do not seem afflicted by the decree. They crack their jokes, and keep their birthday parties, unmindful of the death-sentence hanging over their home, and the atmosphere of the cypress-shaded courtyard is one of cheerful domesticity. Small and muscular fowls run in and out of the stately gateway. The soldiers swing past to their barracks or to the cavalry stables next door. The bugle practice of the recruits outside goes on without interruption, animated if discordant. At all times of the year goatherds and their flocks gather round the monastery—many of them no doubt bringing their annual rents, for the Brotherhood still owns tracts of grazing-ground on the slopes of Hymettus. From this and other tokens it is clear that the Monastery of the Holy Angels was once a wealthy and important land-owner. The brethren were then workers on their own estates, and were probably successful farmers. The little white dome is now half-hidden by the giant cypresses around it. The olive wood which the Greek Government gave as a site for the English and American Schools of Archæology was cut out of the monastery grounds.

In contrast with the cheerful worldliness of the "Holy Angels" is the absolute desolation of *Kaisariani*, once a much larger and more important foundation. It is now ruined and deserted. Little is known of its history. Its architecture would date it to somewhere about the eleventh century, and its name may imply that it was an imperial foundation. Or again, it is just as likely that it may not. Now it has become the usual noonday halting-place on the climb to the summit of Hymettus. It is a spot of rare beauty. A little spring rises near, and a grove of plane-trees have their thirsty roots well nourished by the moisture. It has been suggested that this rivulet is a tributary of the Ilissus, which was known to the ancients as Eridanus, and that the convent stands

on the site of an old temple to Aphrodite. A marble ram's head of classical design was placed by the Turks at the mouth of the spring. When Mohammed II entered Athens in 1458 it was the Abbot of Kaisariani who handed the keys of the town to the conqueror, a time-serving action that is said to have been rewarded by exemption from taxation.

These four monasteries, Daou, Mendeli, Assomatos, and Kaisariani, together with the city church of Nicodemus and the great monastery of Daphni, complete the list of the larger churches in and around Athens. The story of Daphni is so intimately connected with the fortunes of the Frankish Dukes of Athens that it is treated in the next chapter, and we pass on to the little cruciform churches which seem more typically Athenian than their larger neighbours.

Churches of the Cruciform Type.—Most attractive of all the town churches in Athens is the small building that stands outside the garish new Cathedral, its foundations already several feet below the level of the modern pavement. This is the *Metropolitan Church*, so-called not because it was the original cathedral, but probably because it was the church attached to the home of the Bishop or Metropolitan. It has many names. Sometimes it is called the Catholicon, sometimes Saint Saviour (Hagios Elevation), sometimes Panagia Gorgoëpikoos. There are conflicting accounts of its origin. Some claim that it has been built on the site of an ancient temple to Eleithyia, goddess of childbirth, whose name they say survives in the modern name Hagios Elevation, as her cult survives in the special devotion paid to the church by Athenian mothers. Another suggestion, not irreconcilable with the first, is that this church replaced an older Christian building that stood on the same spot, and that was perhaps destroyed by the Iconoclasts in the eighth century. This theory would offer a satisfactory way of

accounting for the haphazard collection of sculpture, of which the church is composed. It certainly looks as though a heathen temple and an older Christian church had both provided materials for the odd patch-work of ornament, classical and Christian, sacred and profane, sometimes right side up and sometimes upside down, which has been built into the four outside walls of the church.

A delicate frieze representing the festivals in the classical calendar is neighbour to Byzantine griffins, and to designs somewhat resembling the *fleur-de-lis* of the Franks. The love of external decoration has run riot. It is like the work of a child playing with jewels; and the result is unique, charming, incongruous. Among the calendar-reliefs there is a representation of the Autumn Feast of Hercules. The hero stands in the middle holding his club; by his side is Hebe, his wife. Beside them are two travellers wrapped in cloaks, a winged figure with a vessel full of fruits, and a horseman, recalling the horse-races of this festival. The scraps of this frieze follow Attic merrymaking through its year and come like a pagan melody among the harmonies of pilgrim-music.

On the south side of the church, fully exposed to the weather, lies a very different relic—a block of grey marble 7 feet long by 2 feet broad and 1 foot high. On this the following inscription is easily read:—

+ Οὗτός ἐστιν ὁ λίθος ἀπὸ Κανᾶ τῆς Γαλιλέας ὅπου
τὸ ὕδωρ οἶνον ἐποίησεν ὁ Κ(ύριος) ἡμῶν Ἰ(ησοῦς)
Χ(ριστός) +

("This is the stone from Cana in Galilee, where our Lord Jesus Christ changed the water into wine.")

Though so little venerated this stone can show better claim to authenticity than most Christian relics.

In the sixth century Antoninus of Plaisance mentions that he was shown at Cana of Galilee the stone couch on which our Lord reclined at the wedding supper, and that he, Antoninus, inscribed on it his own name and that of his parents. This stone tallies with his description, being polished on three sides as a couch placed in an angle of a room would naturally be, and it does actually bear also in faint lettering the following words :—

καὶ τῆς μητρός μου Ἀντωνίνου.

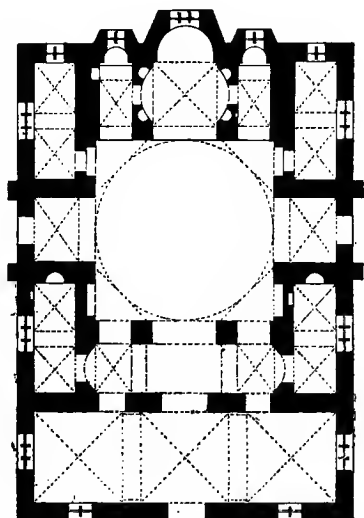
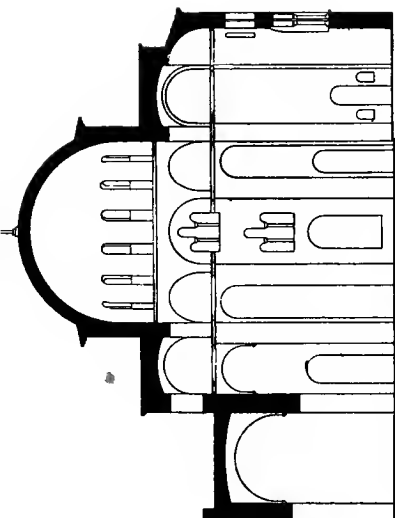
Diehl, who discovered this latter inscription, has conjecturally restored it thus :—

Μνήσθητι, Κύριε, τοῦ πατρὸς καὶ τῆς μητρός μου
Ἀντωνίνου.

("Remember, Oh Lord, the Father and Mother of
me Antoninus.")

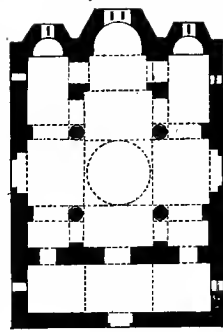
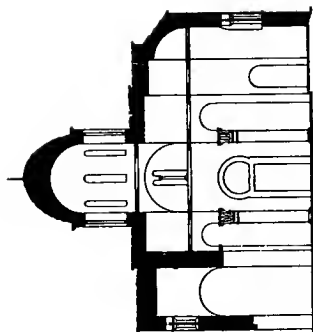
In the end of the nineteenth century this stone was discovered by M. Paris in a ruined church at Elateia. It may be that it was taken from Cana by a Byzantine emperor sometime in the seventh century. Perhaps it accompanied the sacred water-jars from Cana which were shown at Constantinople in the tenth century. At the sack of Constantinople in 1204, when the Crusaders scrambled for the precious relics, this stone may have fallen to the share of some Frankish prince (perhaps Otto de la Roche), who carried it off to adorn his new dominions. The church in which it was found at Elateia dates from the Frankish period, and seems to have been built on purpose to contain it.

The Kapnikaraia.—A more staid edition of the Little Cathedral may be seen in the small church half-way down Hermes Street. In plan it is very much the



MONASTERY CHURCH OF DAPHNI

AFTER SCHULTZ AND BARNSLEY, "SAINT LUKE OF STIRIS," BY PERMISSION OF THE COMMITTEE
OF THE BRITISH SCHOOL AT ATHENS



CHURCH OF THE SAINTS THEODORE

AND GEORGE

BY PERMISSION OF THE COMMITTEE

OF THE BRITISH SCHOOL AT ATHENS

same, and is simplicity itself, with three apses at the east end and a small central dome. The narthex at the west end somewhat masks the cruciform design, which, however, is evident enough in the interior. As far as the evidence of the carving goes this church seems to date from the eleventh or twelfth century. It is popularly known as the Kapnikyria, or Kapnikarea, which has been translated "Our Lady of the smoky aspect." This derivation is based only on the sound analogy, and hardly recommends itself. In Athens there are no "smoky aspects."

The Saints Theodore.—Of the same date and character as the Kapnikaraia is the Church of the two Saints Theodore outside the British Embassy. It once had coloured Rhodian plates built into its outer walls, a pleasant custom of which one often finds traces in Greece. The plates have now disappeared, but the hollow circles that held them still remain. In Portugal one finds the same pretty device, and there I have seen a precious *tazza* of blue glass plastered like an acroterion to the gable of a cottage.

The Church of the Holy Apostles stands a few paces south-west of the Stoa of Attalus. It is probably the earliest in date of the Athenian churches, and is also the simplest in design. Choisy quotes it as a model of its kind. The problem with all these domed churches is how the weight of the dome shall be carried without blocking the central space in the interior of the church. In this case the dome is borne by four double arches, giving the church the form of a Greek cross, and each arm of the cross is finished by an apse. "But what is to bear the outward thrust of the double arches? Must the architect mar his work with buttresses? By a happy inspiration the double arches are consolidated by small trefoil vaults, and thus the vaults encircle the church, press closely together, and support each

other, the outer ones leaning against the massive enclosing wall." This is the building which has been described as "recondite almost to subtlety," yet the effect is one of extreme simplicity. The ugly modern nave must be disregarded.

The "Church Beautiful."—A small Byzantine church, less known than it deserves, lies in the wild scrub country to the north of Lycabettus. The pleasantest way to approach it is on foot. Leaving the Marathon Road almost a mile beyond Ambelokipi, it is easy to strike across the Turkovouni range through one of the steep defiles between the little hills. Across the open country beyond, a cart-track bears away to the right, and brings us, after a mile's walk, to the church, known to the countryside by the endearing name *Omorphi Ekklesia*—"Lovely Church" or "Church Beautiful." Theoretically it may also be reached by carriage from the Patissia Road, but the country is rough and cabmen are wont to pretend ignorance of its whereabouts, so that for a first expedition I should always recommend a journey on foot. It is within sight of the little station of Heracleia, on the Cephissia Railway, and is easily found from this side also if the traveller does not mind a cross-country scramble. Wandering about these lonely moors it is difficult to believe that we are within an hour's walk of a European capital. A few shepherds with fierce dogs, or a solitary brushwood-gatherer are the only friends we are likely to meet. The church, which is small and dark, belongs to the cruciform type, with the central dome rising on a high drum. Its chief variation from the regular type lies in the addition of a narrow narthex and of an extra aisle on the south side. This aisle ends in an apse larger than the two side apses, but not so large as the central apse of the bema. It does not seem to be a later addition, for it is made of the same fine squared blocks of stone with alternate rows of

brick that are seen in the rest of the building. Some later work appears, however, at its west end, where aisle and narthex are of inferior masonry. Little use is made of brick as ornament. Instead of brick designs there are the plain faces of masonry relieved by a delicate marble string-course that must once have run right round the building. There are also light marble columns finished with carved capitals in some of the windows. One of these capitals and some other fragments of carving lie on the floor inside the narthex. The door is usually locked, and the sleepy guardian of the solitude must be roused from some shady corner of the neighbouring huts. After the sunshine the meagre proportions of the church shut us down in chilly darkness. The four large central piers supporting the dome seem far too bulky for the narrow space around them. The whole interior gives an impression of massive solidity out of all proportion to the diminutive building. Yet its beauty is beyond dispute. It is not the beauty of line, but of colour. The darkness is filled with mysterious faces and blurred robes of crimson and blue. The walls have once been covered with fresco, and even where the damp has loosened the original painting it has set green stains to hide the gaps. The paintings in the centre of the church have been much restored. None are intrinsically of special merit, but as we pass from one grave figure to another, our eyes fighting with the darkness, we are left with a general sense of the reverence and fitness of the decoration. In the small apse on the north side there is a representation of God the Father, with the Spirit in the form of a Dove perched on His right forefinger. Behind the nimbus can be faintly distinguished the words Ο ΠΑΛΑΙΟΣ ΤΩΝ ΗΜΕΡΩΝ ("The Ancient of Days.") The superscription is not usual in Byzantine art, and we are grateful to the artist who set his own thought here, striking the note of Eternity for this little church set in the wilds.

There are numerous other small Byzantine churches scattered through Athens. They are already receiving the attention of scholars, and one looks forward to the day when there will be an exhaustive work on the subject. In the meantime they stand in the middle of the modern town, a puzzle and an allurements. On feast days they are dressed with myrtle and small blue flags, and the interior smells of incense and honey. The honey scent seems to come from the candles, which are made of beeswax, a genuine native industry. In a sense the churches seem the special property of the Athenian bourgeoisie, for each one has a distinct place in the life of the citizens. At some of them cures are still wrought, as, for instance, in Saint John of the Column. Here an old church is built around a classical column. It goes through the middle of the church and sticks up through the roof like a chimney. In the inside it is hung with rags brought from the sick who wish to be healed.

The remains of Byzantine Athens hide away in unlikely corners. We find them when we cease to look for them. It is much the same with the story of their builders. We know desperately little of the history of those nine centuries during which the fate of Athens was absorbed in that of her greater neighbour—Constantinople. From the foundation of the Eastern capital of the Roman Empire in the fourth century to its overthrow by the crusaders in 1453, the fortunes of Athens were those of a provincial town on the outskirts of a harassed empire. She had her brief spells of glory, her small triumphs, her recurring misfortunes. Then again she lapsed into obscurity, and for perhaps half a century her history has to be constructed from the mention of the town as a halting-place of an imperial traveller or from a runic inscription left by a northern invader. Owing to this meagreness of information these long centuries have been thrown together and called by the one comprehensive, non-

committal name—"The Byzantine Period." Yet the single term is misleading. These years are not marked by any one salient characteristic. Athens was not on the downward grade throughout. There was a period of economic decay followed by a slow revival of prosperity. Society passed through a variety of changes. The provincial institutions of ancient Greece slowly moulded themselves to the form of Byzantine feudalism, as in a later age the Byzantine Archon and Kavallaris themselves in turn gave way to the Frankish Baron and Knight.

Speaking broadly, the period of decline in Greece lasted from the Emperor Constantine to Justinian, and from Justinian onwards there was a gradual increase of prosperity. As the power of Christianity increased Athens gradually lost her prestige. History inclines to depict her as the faded beauty who clings to the memory of her former triumphs. She still practises the heathen rites, still keeps open her schools, and wonders why the world no longer heeds the voice of her charming. In time she is forced to recognize that her old position is undermined. The new teaching which had drawn men's hearts from the outward to the inward and had set symbolism for beauty was now united to the seat of world-power. The new hierarchy in heaven and earth left Athens and Olympus bare. What was the Parthenon bereft of the brooding spirit of the great image within? What was Parnassos without those dim presences among its clouds?

The flower of pride hath bloomed, the ripened fruit
Of suffering is all garnered up in tears :
Ye that have seen the Reaper's wages told,
Remember Athens.

These words of an older poet read like a prophecy of the desolation that was felt by the finer spirits of the

time. Yet probably to most Athenians of the fourth and fifth centuries after Christ, matters did not present themselves in this tragic guise. Athens had lost her pre-eminence in the religious world, but she still had her mission in the new society. As the university town *par excellence* she filled a place to the Eastern Empire for which it is impossible to find a modern parallel. All that Oxford and Cambridge have been to British scholars, all that Paris has been to European society, that Athens was for two centuries to the Byzantine world. Scholars were attracted by her schools of philosophy and rhetoric. Courtiers and officials came here to gain an Athenian manner and a conversational knowledge of the Greek tongue, important assets in court life.

To understand what Athens was in this age it is enough to look at one of the most notable of her scholars—one who spent less than a year at her schools (A.D. 355–6), and yet counted Greece as his “true Fatherland,” spoke of Athens as a lover, and wished that he could be “chained to the beloved benches” of the school.

The Emperor Julian, known throughout Christendom as “Julian the Apostate,” is one of the most pathetic figures in history. During his lonely and oppressed boyhood he had learned to hate the Christian religion forced upon him by his cousin the Emperor Constantine. It must be admitted that Constantine’s conduct in murdering Julian’s father and other male relatives had not been calculated to inspire confidence in the religion that bore such fruit. Throughout his youth Julian was obliged to profess himself a Christian, but the idealism of his nature shrank from the harsh caricature of religion that surrounded him, and he turned enthusiastically to the teaching of the Greek philosophers. The main tragedy of his life lies in this, that his nature was one pre-eminently fitted to respond to a purified form of the Christian faith had there been any one qualified to

present it to him ; had, for instance, Augustine taken the place of Gregory as his fellow-scholar. But connecting as he did the profession of Christianity with the hypocrisy and corruption of the imperial court, he thought it more possible to revive a purified form of paganism than to dissociate Christianity from its abuses. His short life as emperor was embittered by his futile attempts to galvanize a corrupt empire with his own mythical fervour. He and others of his school sought to give the old Olympian gods a new lease of life, and in this they were working against the trend of the age. A later generation enriched Christianity by bringing into it the philosophy and mysticism of the Neo-Platonists. To a man of Julian's sympathies it is easy to see what the months in Athens must have meant. When his studies were interrupted by a sudden summons to the imperial court he was broken-hearted. In his manifesto to the Athenians he says :—

“What torrents of tears I shed and how many laments, extending my hands to your Acropolis, and praying Athena to save the suppliant and not abandon him ; to this many of you who have witnessed it can attest, and above all the goddess herself whom I besought to let me die in Athens, rather than leave it.”

But the day came when Athens was to lose even the prestige that remained to her as the first school in the empire. Two imperial edicts brought this period to a close. The first established a rival university at Constantinople in the fifth century. The second (A.D. 529) was the edict of Justinian closing the schools of Athens and thus drawing the masters of thought to his own capital. Athens lost her university, yet there remained for centuries a certain intellectual energy and vividness among the citizens which distinguished them from the more orientalized subjects of the rulers of Constantinople. That at least is the impression one

derives not only from the chance sayings of *literati* like Synesius of Cyrene but also from the character of the two Athenian ladies, brilliant and hard as polished steel, who at long distant dates attracted the admiration of the Cæsar and mounted the imperial throne.

The first of these was Eudocia, whose original name was Athenaïs, the daughter of an Athenian rhetorician and educated as a pagan, At the age of twenty-seven by her striking beauty she attracted the admiration of the young Emperor Theodosius II, changed her religion and her name and became his Empress (A.D. 421). At the age of fifty she fell under suspicion of unfaithfulness and was banished to Jerusalem, where she died after sixteen years of exile. Tradition credits her with the building of twelve Athenian churches. The other more masterful personality was that of Irene, who towards the end of the eighth century married one of the Iconoclastic Emperors, Leo IV. In her the old Athenian love of art survived sufficiently to induce her on the death of her husband to renounce the faith and oppress the cause of the Iconoclasts, the image-breakers. She ruled the empire for many years as regent for her son : when he grew up she still kept hold of the reins, was unseated, struggled back into power, headed a successful revolt against her son, imprisoned and blinded him. She all but became the wife of the Emperor Charlemagne, but was at last overthrown by another palace revolution and died in exile in the Island of Lesbos (A.D. 803). In the persons of these two Athenian Empresses the Greek spirit knew a temporary triumph over her conquerors.

Bitterly though the closing of the universities was resented at the time, its results may have been salutary to Athens from one point of view. Trade took the place of scholarship, and from the time of Justinian she was able to share in the revival of prosperity throughout the

empire. The *coup de grâce* had been given to her old claims and to the old memories of heathendom. By the sixth century the people of Athens had left off bemoaning their vanished glories. They had learnt to be proud of their Emperor, proud of their connection with Byzantium, and proud that the Greek language was still used at court. In return Justinian showed himself mindful of their safety. The gates of Northern Greece, Thermopylæ, Heraklea, and the Euripus were strengthened with fortresses. The walls of Athens and Eleusis were rebuilt and the fortified monastery of Daphni was placed at the most defensible point of the road from Eleusis. For the last five centuries the city had lain at the mercy of Visigoths, Vandals, Kostobocs, Herulians, as well as all the pirate hordes of the Mediterranean. She alone stemmed the tide of Gothic invasion in A.D. 262. Now at last she could cease to play the rôle of beauty in distress and, sheltered under the spreading wings of the empire, her citizens seem to have settled down to the jog-trot content of provincial life.

There is a story that so well illustrates the tremendous prestige of Athens even in the eyes of the barbarian world that I cannot refrain from quoting it, though it is vouched for by no better authority than Zosimus, a thoroughly narrow-minded old pagan. The date is somewhere in the last five years of the fourth century A.D. Alaric, the newly elected leader of the Visigoths, inaugurated his career by a raid on the provinces of the Eastern Empire, striking first at the seemingly defenceless Athens. Then "having gathered all his troops round the sacred city of Athens he was about to proceed to the assault. When lo! he beheld Athena Promachus, just as she is represented in her statues, clothed in full armour going round about the walls thereof, and Achilles standing upon the battlements with that aspect of divine rage and thirst for battle which Homer ascribes to him when

he heard of the death of Patroclus. Awe-struck at the sight, Alaric desisted from his warlike enterprise, signalled for truce, and concluded a treaty with the Athenians. After which he entered the city in peaceful guise with a few of his followers, was hospitably entertained by the chief inhabitants, received presents from them and departed, leaving both Athens and Attica untouched by the ravages of war."

Whatever lies at the foundation of this strange myth, it shows that Athens still kept a mysterious power over the hearts of men. Her first conquerors had felt it. To Philip of Macedon Athens humiliated was still the "theatre of glory." Even Alexander, sorely tried though he was, could never take vengeance on Athens. Sulla the Roman ravaged the city, but Alaric the Goth turned back ashamed from her defenceless walls. After Justinian her position was changed. Her territory was defended by substantial forts and garrisons. The glamour somewhat vanishes, and no more is heard of Achilles and Athena.

The time of reviving prosperity under the Emperors who followed Justinian appears to have been one great period of church-building throughout Attica. Another came in the eighth and ninth centuries and may be attributed to the encouragement of the Empress Irene. The churches, as we have seen, are not large, but they are numerous. There is no single magnificent building speaking of a strong national life; rather there are many pretty little churches such as would spring up in a prosperous society of citizens, who, while retaining their old love of beautiful architecture, had frankly adopted the new religion. Gregorovius holds that the number of these churches is accounted for by the fact that Byzantine Athens was anxious to replace each heathen shrine by a Christian church. In many cases he has been able to establish a connection, either verbal or essential, between the Christian saint and the heathen deity. Thus Saint

George the dragon-slayer replaces Herakles at Marathon and Theseus in Athens ; Athena becomes Saint Sophia in the Parthenon ; Artemis Amarysia becomes the Holy Virgin at Maroussi (Amaryseion). Sometimes the connection is only philological, as when Saint Demetrius replaces Demeter, and Eleithyia becomes Hagios Eleutherios (Saint Saviour). But though it is obvious that in almost every case the church stood on the site of some heathen shrine, it is too much to say that the sanctity of the precinct was the cause of the church being built. The temper of the Athenians was still "very religious," and the revival of prosperity gave them the opportunity of beautifying their town while honouring their patron saints. No doubt the presence of an old shrine helped to decide the question where a new church should be placed. The continuity of sacred sites is a marked characteristic throughout Greece, one of the most permanent elements among her shifting records. It is not uncommon in modern times to see a new church built over and around the older one which it is to replace. Not until the new one is completed is the old one demolished. Numerous as the churches are now, there were many more at the beginning of last century, for numbers perished in that barbarous wave of modernism that swept over Athens in the beginning of Otho's reign, and others have been sacrificed that the classical sites below them might be explored.

The last romantic character who flashes across the darkness of Athenian history during this Byzantine period is Hardrada, whose name figures on the stone lion which Morosini carried to Venice from the Piræus. The runes on it have been translated thus, on the right side: "Hakon re-united to Ulf, to Asmund and to Orn, conquered this port. These men and Harald the Tall imposed considerable fines owing to the insurrection of the Greek nation. Dalk was kept in captivity in distant countries ;

Égil went on a campaign with Ragnar in Roumania . . . and Armenia."

And on the left side : "Asmund engraved these runes in union with Asgeir, Thorleif, Thord, and Ivar by request of Harald the Tall, although the Greeks on reflection forbade it."

If this be the correct reading of the inscriptions,¹ this old lion from the Piræus guards a chapter of Athenian history rich in romantic possibilities. Harald (brother of King Olaf of Norway) made his way as a young man through Russia to Constantinople and took service under the Byzantine emperors. He won the confidence of the Værings (the Emperor's northern mercenaries) until at last they would have none other to be their captain.

The Heimskringla Saga tells the story, and though it does not mention Athens by name, it shows how he roamed the Mediterranean fighting the African pirates and visiting "Greekland," i.e. the Greek-speaking world.

"Harald had been but for a little while in the host

¹ A later reading which omits Harald's name runs thus :—

On the left side :

"After Haakon Ulfung's men cut these runes when they heard of his death in this harbour. In recompense for him very many of the Greek folk had now to suffer thralldom. There was famous plundering, so that merchant ships were taken. Holmkel won rich booty there."

On the right side :

"Asmund cut these runes and Asgaut also some. Those in the land had to pay in full for him who fell bloody in the fight, even though it was long after the hostile deed ; for the warrior-band owns plundered goods in excess as recompense for the enormous crime. Sakar won rich booty there."

Finally on the left hind-leg :

"Gallant men cut the runes ; also Karl carved."

I am indebted to Mr. W. A. Craigie, of Oxford, for the above translation from Professor Sophus Bugge's *Populær-Videnskabelige Foredrag*, published in 1907.



COLOSSAL LION FROM PIRAEUS
NOW OUTSIDE THE ARSENAL AT VENICE

when the Værings drew them much to him, and they would fare all together whenso were battles, and it came to this that Harald became captain over all the Værings. He and Grygir fared wide about the isles of Greekland and wrought mighty deeds of war on the corsairs."

After winning fame and riches in Africa, Sicily, and the Eastern Mediterranean, Harald fell into disgrace; according to the Saga he had won the love of the Empress Zoe and was imprisoned in Constantinople. He and two boatfuls of Værings escaped from Constantinople. The harbour entrance was chained, but shooting at the chain with his boat he made the vessel leap the barrier and slide over, and so escaped. After this he made his way to Norway through Russia and never came south again. Wars with Denmark and with England filled the rest of his life, and at the age of fifty he was killed by the English Harald in the Battle of Stamford Bridge, just before Harald was killed by William at Hastings. He is thus one of the few links between England and the East during these early days. His life is one of unparalleled adventure, and the stormy days of his youth in the sunny Mediterranean make a streak of glory across the grey, grim tales of the Sagas. On his return from Constantinople we read how he "let spread abroad a big neat's hide, and let pour thereon the gold from the bags; then were scales gotten and weights and the money was parted asunder and shared all of weight; and all who saw it thought it a mickle wonder that in the Northlands so much gold should be come together in one place. But indeed this was the havings and wealth of the King of the Greeks, where, as all men say, houses are full of red gold."

IX

THE AGE OF CHIVALRY

I

DAPHNI AND THE DUKES OF ATHENS

BETWEEN the last view of Athens and the first view of the Bay of Salamis there lies on the Sacred Way a stretch of almost level road. Here the hills shut in the pass to north and south. The pines grow thicker, the narrow stretch of grass by the roadside widens to an English greensward across which the wooded slopes of Mount Ægaleus make a deep shadow.

It is a spot to dream in, a place hidden from the remembrance of the outside world, and Nature seems to have provided it on that much-trodden road between Athens and Eleusis as the inevitable point for a noonday halt. Here the Greeks set a temple to "Apollo of the Laurel," and though the laurels no longer grow, they are remembered in the modern name of "Daphni." On the site of the old temple there is now a ruined Byzantine monastery—the Monastery of Daphni—dear to all who know it. All that is seen from the road as one approaches is the ruin of a large enclosure with a battlemented front running parallel to the Sacred Way, and behind it the ruddy dome of a church built of sand-

stone with lines of red tiles set between each course. The whole effect as seen from this point is of a strong square base below and sweeping curves above. The enclosure runs from the road to the foot of the hill. The piece of wall that remains suggests a fortress rather than a monastery, and if Monsieur Millet's theory be correct, it was to seize a point of defence on the main road to Athens that the first monastery was founded here in the fifth or sixth century. Quite possibly it was Justinian himself, that great defender of imperial outposts, who set the brotherhood here to watch as well as to pray. Half a mile further along the road to Eleusis remains of another mediaeval fortification are visible; here some force of soldiers may have been lodged to defend the monastery in case of need. All that is left of the early monastery is the enclosing wall, some cells behind it, and the foundations of the west end of the first church. The code of monasticism was stern in those earliest days. The cells of the monks were placed in the most retired corner of the enclosure. In the outer court the monastery carried on its gracious work as healer and teacher of the neighbourhood. The inner court was reserved for the dwellings of the brotherhood, where they could meditate and pray behind the wall that screened them from the comings and goings of the high road. By the eleventh century the traditions of the place had changed. The monastery had probably been deserted, then re-occupied and partially rebuilt; and the monks had lost their reputation for austerity.

To this latter period belongs the delightful story told by Theodoros Prodromos in his life of Meletios, in which he tells how one of the Daphni brotherhood left the monastery and sought admission in another settlement which Meletios had founded on Mount Cithæron. Meletios was the leader of a small monastic revival; he was also a disciplinarian and apparently a reader of

character. Before many months had passed the monk from Daphni found that he had no vocation for sainthood. He resolved to return to the sheepskin beds, the soft raiment, and the good living at Daphni, and at the same time to take with him the golden chalice of these Brothers who were too ignorant to value the good things of life. Having stolen and hidden his prize, he came to his superior to ask for leave of absence. "Go in peace," answered Meletios; "it is not by violence that we would constrain men to follow the path of virtue. But as for that cup which you have stolen and hidden under a stone, it must be restored lest the holy brethren be scandalized." At these words the monk threw himself to the ground confessing his fault and imploring pardon.

The thirteenth century was full of stirring events. In 1204 the empire was shaken to its foundations by the Latin conquest of Constantinople, and even remote Daphni felt the shock. In 1205 Otto de la Roche seized the principality of Athens and his army sacked the monastery. There is no word of slaughter, so it is probable that the monks ran away before the approach of the marauding crusaders. After the disappearance of the orthodox community Otto de la Roche handed the monastery over to the Abbey of Bellevaux, his neighbour in Burgundy. It seems a somewhat impracticable gift, but the missionary enthusiasm of those days refused to admit obstacles. Probably not later than 1207 Daphni was occupied by a band of Cistercian brothers, and in 1211 it received recognition as daughter community of the Burgundian Cistercians. It now became the Westminster of the new principality of Athens, and here the chiefs of the De la Roche dynasty were buried.

It is here at Daphni that one comes nearest to the days of the Frankish Dukes. In Athens itself little remains of their building. This is not wholly due to the greater excellence of the classical work. The Franks

were no jerry-builders, as may be seen from the fortresses at Mistra and Gheraki and other remains in the Peloponnese. At Athens the tower built by one of the Burgundian or Italian Dukes should still have been visible at the west end of the Acropolis had it not been deliberately destroyed in 1874 by the classical enthusiasts who cleared the Acropolis of all mediaeval buildings. Engravings of the eighteenth century show the high, rather narrow stone tower standing a little to the north of the Propylæa. It looked strange enough among the shining marble columns, and it was perhaps natural that when the old Turkish town on the hill-top was demolished the Frankish remains vanished also. From the classical point of view the work of restoration has been so brilliantly successful that regrets seem ungrateful, and yet the lover of mediaevalism sighs for this vanished landmark of the Franks.

Although this period (1205-1456) is commonly spoken of as the period of Frankish rule, it must be remembered that in Attica at any rate only one Frank, in the strict sense, ever was Duke. The house of De la Roche came from Burgundy; Walter of Brienne, who succeeded them, was a Frenchman, but his kingdom fell to the Catalan Dukes, who were of Spanish origin. The Acciaiuoli were an Italian family, and on their downfall the principality became part of the Turkish Empire. Yet the term "Frankish" is not altogether a misnomer, for the civilization that the conquerors brought with them was the civilization of France, and French was the language spoken throughout the country. Even to-day an Englishman may hear himself spoken of as a "Frank" when he is in the East. One wonders if the general widespread use of the word "Frank" for a man of Western Europe dates from the fourth crusade,

After the fall of Constantinople the dominions of the Byzantine Empire were parcelled out among the

crusaders, the French and the Venetians obtaining a lion's share. Buchon summarizes the sudden growth of French power in a telling sentence: "A Frankish empire was founded at Constantinople, a Frankish kingdom at Salonica, and Frankish principalities from Thermopylæ to Cape Matapan." Boniface, Marquis of Montferrat, who had held the office of commander-in-chief in the crusading army, was made king of a wide territory stretching round the coast from the Island of Thasos to the Isthmus of Corinth. Out of this kingdom of Saloniki, as it was called, were carved fiefs for lesser knights. Foremost among these was Otto de la Roche, a Burgundian nobleman, who gained possession of Athens and Thebes. Otto was known by the vague title *Megas Kyrēs*, or Grand Sire. His successor, Guy, obtained from Louis IX of France the right to use the title Duke of Athens. In passing one notes the magnanimity of the gentle Louis, who gave this new honour to Guy on the occasion of a penitentiary visit. Guy had gone to France to beg the king's forgiveness for his breach of the peace with William Villehardouin, a neighbour in the South, and returned not only with forgiveness but with a new title to boot. The French kings were indulgent overlords to these distant fiefs—indeed, it would have been hard to be anything else, for the arm of royal justice could not reach to Greece.

For a hundred and three years Athens remained in the hands of this Burgundian dynasty. It was only on the extinction of the male line of De la Roche that the Duchy passed to Walter of Brienne, the son of a French knight, "true athlete of Christ and fathful boxer of the Church."

Walter of Brienne held Athens for three years. During his short reign the foreign dynasty touched its highest point of wealth and power. Yet in 1311 his splendid array of knights was destroyed on the banks of the

Cephissus in Bœotia. The Duke was killed and the Duchy of Athens passed to his conquerors, the Catalan Grand Company.

The adventures of this band of mercenary knights make one of the strangest chapters of history. They had fought in Sicily during the long wars between Anjou and Arragon. Then when the peace of 1282 left the lawless elements of the population out of employment they left Sicily and sailed to Constantinople, where they first served, and afterwards defied, the Emperor Andronicus. Having laid waste the banks of the Bosphoros, they became mere brigands and fought their way through Macedonia and Thessaly, descending finally upon Greece, where Walter of Brienne was glad to accept their services in his struggle with the neighbouring princes of Wallachia and Epirus. They then served him as they had already served the emperor. Having emptied his treasuries at the rate of some thousand pounds per day, they refused to accept dismissal and turned their arms against their employer. Composed of heterogeneous elements and various nationalities, they seem to have been in a chronic state of mutiny in every interval of peace; yet in the field their discipline was perfect and throughout they managed to retain their title of "unconquered Catalans." In 1840 the fall of a wall at Chalcis brought to light an enormous quantity of ancient arms and armour of the fourteenth century, some of which is evidently of Spanish, some of French, and some of Turkish workmanship. These were brought to Athens and may still be seen in the Polytechnic Museum, a large building almost next door to the National Museum.

It was on the banks of the Bœotian Cephissus (a rather larger river than its Athenian namesake) that the great battle was fought.

The river, which rises on Parnassos, flowed at this

date into the Copaic Lake. It was in the month of March that Walter of Brienne set out from his gay capital of Thebes to meet the Catalans in the plain that encloses the bed of this river, at a time of year when the snows on Parnassos were melting and the river must have been at its fullest. The Catalan leaders blocked the bed of the river and turned its waters over the surrounding country then covered with springing corn. The Frankish knights scorning subtle devices put their horses straight at the foe, but before they could reach them they were caught in this newly-made bog. The Catalans striding in among them on foot had only to butcher the Franks as they floundered in the mire. The tactics are similar to those used at the Battle of Bannockburn only three years later. Had the tale of the Frankish defeat been brought by roving troubadours to Scotland, or were these but the obvious tactics of a time when the day was won if the first terrific onslaught of the enemy could be broken? This battle on the Cephissus took place only a few leagues from the site of the still more famous Battle of Chæronea, when again the lords of Athens and Thebes had been routed by an invader from the North (338 B.C.). But on that occasion the cavalry under young Alexander charged with great effect. The lion which the Thebans placed here to commemorate their dead long lay in fragments on the ground. It has now been put together again and sits looking with gloomy brows across the plain, where the eagles hover over meadows sanguine still with crimson poppies.

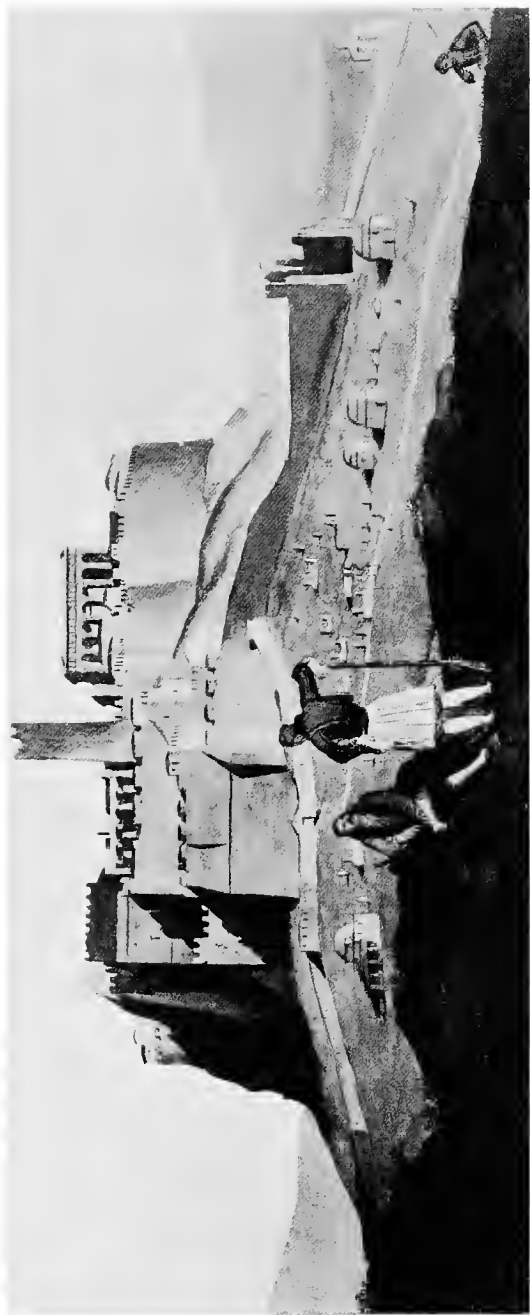
After this catastrophe the Duchy of Athens remained in the hands of the Catalan Grand Company. The adventurers became rulers and settled on the good land they had won. At the end of fifteen years they put themselves under the Sicilian branch of the house of Arragon and the Duchy of Athens remained an appanage of Sicily until the year 1388.

In this year the Catalans felt foul of their powerful neighbour, Nerio Acciaiuoli, who was Governor of Corinth. Perhaps the seventy years of peace had demoralized their fighting qualities. At all events the "unconquered Catalans" were defeated by an enemy whom two generations earlier they would have despised. The Acciaiuoli were originally a Florentine family of bankers. Like the Medici in the following century, they rose by means of their wealth first to be ministers and then rulers. Nerio was in the service of the Neapolitan dynasty of Arragon when appointed to the governorship of Corinth. The overthrow of the Catalan Company eventually gave him the Duchy of Athens in addition to the other territories over which he ruled. His son Antony Acciaiuoli had a peaceful reign of forty years. He adorned the city with many buildings, but if any remain they cannot be identified. Finlay describes him "inviting his Florentine relations to Greece and entertaining them with festivals and hunting-parties"—a pleasant picture to place against our classical background. It is the Athens of "*A Midsummer Night's Dream*," but what did Shakespeare know of this romantic bypath of history?

In spite of apparent prosperity the dominion of the Western princes in Greece was slowly crumbling. The fall of one house weakened its neighbours. In 1432 the princes of Achaia finally yielded to the growing power of the Byzantines aided by their splendid Albanian levies. The Kingdom of Saloniki had also lost its separate existence and in 1320 it was merged in the Empire of Roumania. As Walter of Brienne had sacrificed his kingdom by calling in the Catalans to aid him, so Nerio of the house of Acciaiuoli paved the way for the downfall of his dynasty by allying himself with the vigorous Ottoman power. In 1453 Europe was shocked by the news that the Turks had taken Constantinople, and

from that time it was a foregone conclusion that the decadent Latin kingdoms in Greece would eventually be absorbed in the expansion of the Ottoman Empire. Three years after the fall of Constantinople, Mohammed II besieged Franco Acciaiuoli in the Acropolis and made himself master of Attica. The permanent population of the country had had time to grow tired of the misgovernment of their Florentine masters ; and even as the Franks had been hailed as deliverers from the tyranny of Byzantine officials, so the Turks were welcomed as deliverers from the " Franks " as the Italian rulers were still called. This, then, is the brief outline of the period during which the chivalry of the West held court in Athens.

The impression left by the chronicles is that this was a time of prosperity almost unequalled in Greek history. To be sure the chroniclers themselves were all more or less under the glamour of hero-worship. Whether the hero were the chronicler or his lord, the vivid exaggerations and prejudices of a partisan make the old records very good reading. The *Metrical book of the Conquest*, in the gallicized greek of the period was written seemingly by a Gasmule, as the child of Greek and French parents was called. Villehardouin's *Conquest of Constantinople* was written by a French knight who tells of the taking of Constantinople and the subsequent division of Greece among the crusaders. The *Chronicle of the Noble Ramon Muntaner* is by a Spanish leader in the Catalan Company. Thus two at least of the three authorities were soldiers and eye-witnesses of the events they describe. The chronicles of Villehardouin are coloured by the author's devotion to the Marquis of Montferrat with whose death the record ends ; while Muntaner's writings are the reminiscences of an old soldier, who from the peace of his own Spanish castle looked back upon a long life of desperate adven-



ACROPOLIS FROM THE PNYX SHOWING FRANKISH TOWER
AFTER L. DUPRÉ, "VOYAGE À ATHÈNES ET À CONSTANTINOPLE," (1825)

tures. The records ring with the joy of action ; they have the soldier's frankly one-sided view of history and a genial acceptance of the inevitable. And what an age of romance that was ! Is there anything in history equal to this tale of the gay crusaders who set out with the Church's blessing to win the sepulchre of Christ and who turned aside to destroy the great bulwark of Christendom against the Turk, and who then as they struggled home helped themselves to the territories of the Christian princes of the East ? That lands thus won should have been held for so many generations is one of the marvels of history. The conquerors must have been born rulers and born soldiers, and for the peace of Europe one can but give thanks that their like are known no more.

In Athens itself there does not seem to have been much resistance to their rule. Michael Akominatos, the Archbishop of Athens, had shown himself in former times capable of defending his see as a warrior-priest, but he submitted to the inevitable and retired to the little Island of Keos. The Latin form of worship was celebrated in the Greek churches of Athens ; the Parthenon became "Our Lady of Athens." Only in one church (beside the Tower of the Winds) the Greek priests were still allowed to perform their services. This was afterwards turned into a mosque and is now a military bakehouse.

The letters of the good old Archbishop Akominatos tell us what little we know of the town of Athens at the time of the conquest. Incidentally also his own portrait is revealed and we see him spending the evening of his life in exile, amusing himself with the works of Euclid, and perhaps on a fair day cheered by the sight of the Attic coast-line on his north-west horizon. Ramon Muntaner would have us believe that a thousand French knights with their families were settled in Attica and Bœotia.

This total need not be accepted as literally accurate, but it helps us to realize that at this time Athens and Thebes, the two capitals of the De la Roche dynasty, were both large and prosperous towns. The country was thickly covered with villages; trade flourished in oil and wine, in silk and in purple dye, and of more than one Duke of Athens it is recorded that he "embellished the town with buildings." The Latins of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries had a lusty barbarian scorn for the builders of the Parthenon. They did not hesitate to place their palace within the walls of the Propylæa, to build the ancient blocks into their tower, nor to celebrate Mass in the Parthenon. In this, however, they were but following the example of their predecessors who had made of it a Christian basilica. It is as though the pale background of antiquity were suddenly made the scene of a mediaeval tourney with all its blare and blazonry. For two and a half centuries the bold show lasted. Then it passed as suddenly as it came, and with the echoes of its tumult passed the remembrance of its deeds. Only such lovers of romance as Boccaccio, Chaucer, and Shakespeare kept alive the name of "Duke of Athens."

Daphni was in its glory during the days of the De la Roche dynasty. The archives at Mons state that this was the burial-place of the family. Walter of Brienne also left directions that he was to be buried here. A large marble sarcophagus standing on the left side of the church door bears in relief a cross quartered with fleur-de-lis and snakes. For many years this was known as the tomb of Guy de la Roche, but M. Millet has pointed out that these were not the arms of the De la Roche family—nor indeed of any known knight.

Neither the Spanish nor the Italian rulers of Athens paid the same regard to Daphni, yet it kept some importance as a centre of French culture. The connec-

tion with the parent community was no fictitious bond, and every four years the abbot had to journey across Europe to attend the Chapter General at Cîteaux. The complaints made by the elderly abbots of the life of adventure thus imposed upon them led to the gradual extension of the interval at which the journeys were taken. As an outpost planted well in the enemy's country Daphni enjoyed more consideration than the size of its community would warrant. One abbot returned from his pilgrimage to Cîteaux with no less precious a relic than an arm of John the Baptist.

Instead of sinking into insignificance and merging in the Greek world around them the little band of Cistercian brethren retained for centuries their French traditions and kept alive their fellowship with all the religious world of western Europe. Of the Cistercian cloister little now remains except the two rows of arcade in the courtyard. In the wall of the church are corbels which supported one side of the cloister. There are also tierce-point arches at the west end, which are quite in harmony with French architecture of the thirteenth century.

To-day one approaches the church through a courtyard on the south side. The court as we see it is comparatively modern, but the spirit of the place has sealed this also in its bond of peace. The whitewashed columns and the dull green paint of doors and windows have been toned by time to pleasing harmony. A well-wrought bell of old green bronze hangs low in the branches of a tree and behind it four giant cypresses and a twisted olive are silhouetted against the light buildings of the courtyard. The Cistercians of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries would surely feel at home if they entered the low doorway to-day.

From the courtyard the church is entered through a door on its south side, but to get a true idea of the

building we must stand at the west end where the original entrance was placed and from there look down the length of the church to the three apses glowing with colour, at the east end. The church is not large. The porch outside this western door is apparently an addition by the Cistercians of the thirteenth century. The original eleventh-century building comprised only the narthex and the basilica, in the centre of which rose the dome. The ground-plan is simplicity itself. The outward pressure of the large vault is met by eight solid buttresses, instead of the apses and cupolas that bear the thrust in some of the smaller churches.

The interior did not depend for effect on an elaborate perspective of receding columns, arches, and niches. Nothing was there to distract the eye from the main beauty of the church—its glorious mosaics. It is impossible to get much satisfaction from the fragments of these still left in place, owing to the conscientious restoration with its unsightly patches of white plaster. Yet one who knows the churches of Palermo or Ravenna will not find it hard to imagine how Daphni looked in its days of glory. The old monks stood on a pavement of rich inlaid marbles, the gold and blue of the mosaic wall shining out of the coloured gloom; the tempered light slanting into the church through the stained glass overhead. In the height of the central dome the deep eyes of the Pantocrator were bent over the worshippers as from the gold vault of heaven. Around Him circled sixteen prophets, while beneath were four gospel scenes referring to the union of the divine and human natures in Christ: the Annunciation, the Nativity, the Baptism, and the Transfiguration. The rest of the church is filled with scenes chosen from the gospels and with portraits of bishops, deacons, martyrs and biblical characters. In the apse at the east end the Virgin was seated with an archangel on either side of her.

As regards date the mosaics must be placed between the rebuilding of the monastery in the eleventh and its occupation by the Cistercians in the twelfth century. In the main they adhere to the traditional types of such work, yet there are innovations in the treatment of gesture and drapery that show a distinct advance on the earlier mosaics of Justinian's age.

One can pass out of the church by a small door on the north side. Here are the ruins of the old eleventh-century refectory and the original fortress wall of the earliest enclosure. On this side the façade of the church is in a state of comparatively good repair, solid stone walls with no decoration beyond the three windows and their arches of ornamental brickwork. The narrow lights of the windows and their slender shafts are just sufficient to relieve the general impression of rather sombre plainness. From this point the junction of the old eleventh-century church with the porch on the west is well seen.

A scramble round the north-west corner brings one in front of the façade of the porch. Here are unsightly gaps due to earthquakes and Lord Elgin. Earthquakes have torn away a third of the façade, and Lord Elgin has removed the Ionic pillars and capitals which formed the chief glory of this arcade. One column and one capital remain on the south side.

After the latin conquest Daphni ceased to grow. For two and a half centuries the Catholic community lived on prosperous but isolated. During the last century of its existence it remained as a solitary watch-tower forsaken by its founders and no longer able to keep in touch with its parent house at Citeaux. In 1458 when Mohammed II entered Athens the Cistercians left Daphni. For a time the monastery was deserted. Then the tolerance of the Ottoman Government allowed the Christians to reinhabit it ; this time, however, it was once more an "Orthodox" (i.e., Greek church) and not a "Catholic" settlement.

The rest of the story is a tale of decay. Travellers in the seventeenth¹ and eighteenth² centuries found it almost deserted. The monks were perpetually driven to take refuge from Turks and corsairs in a hermitage in the hill above. During the War of Independence it was used as a barracks and a powder-magazine, and for a time it also served as a lunatic asylum. To-day it is left to the dignified seclusion of old age. The spirit of peace has fallen upon it and nothing breaks the stillness of its solitude. Only on a *festa* a few young Greeks from Athens come to drink coffee at the little wayside inn under its shadow. They throw their caps in the air and dance on the turf, but with sunset their shadows vanish and the ghosts of the De la Roche Dukes of Athens steal out to pace the cloisters of their burial-place.

A few hundred yards to the south-east of the monastery there is a small chapel in ruins, containing two tombs that seem to date from the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. There is a legend which makes the chapel the retreat of an old hermit before the monastery was built. The legend, which may go back to Frankish times, tells how the son of the King of Megara loved the daughter of the King of Eleusis. The marriage was approved by the two kings and all went well until one day the Prince mysteriously disappeared. Years passed away, and seeing that he did not return his betrothed determined to take the veil. She retired to Daphni, where she waited humbly on the old hermit in the little chapel and spent her days in prayer and fasting. One day she was preparing a fish for the old man's supper when inside it she found the ring she had given her lover. Now indeed she knew that he was surely drowned, and the time of her noviciate being over she took the veil. This is the point at which the vanished hero makes a dramatic entry rolling before him a heavy barrel, which turns out

¹ Spon and Wheler, 1678.

² Chandler, 1765.

to be full of florins. There are six similar barrels waiting on the beach, and after these have all been brought up to the monastery the Prince explains that he had lost his ring while bathing and immediately afterwards had been carried off by pirates and sold to a rich merchant at Algiers. In cultivating his master's land he had come across a hidden treasure, and having bought his freedom he asked to be sent back to his native land and to take with him as a present a few barrels of salt. The merchant seems to have considered this a reasonable request and the florins were safely hidden in the salt. The Prince had hoped to marry the Princess and claim his kingdom, but finding that his beloved has become a nun he vows that he will turn monk. With the contents of three barrels they build the monastery of Daphni and end their days there with the old hermit. The contents of the remaining four barrels are still hidden in the woods behind the monastery. When they are found the monastery will be rebuilt and will enjoy a second period of glory. Thus ends the legend which has the true ring of French romantic poetry and carries us back to the days when Burgundian knights and ladies rode out to the fresh woods of Daphni and reconstructed the old story of "Pierre et Maguelonne" to suit the new surroundings. In passing one may also suggest that the heroine's name may have lingered, become changed to Madeleine, and thus have given rise to the otherwise untraceable legend that the monastery was founded by Mary Magdalene.

II

THEBES AND THE COMING OF AGE OF
GUY DE LA ROCHE

Thebes we visited in early spring. There had been heavy rains and the fountain of Ares was surrounded by deep pools of water. The heavy clayey soil clung

to our shoes. Bœotian mud is different from the soupy Attic mud, as different as Bœotia and the Thebans are still in every particular distinct from Attica and the Athenians. The first spring rains had softened the buds of the plane-trees, and the streets of the town on the hill above the fountain were thatched with young green leaves and paved with little runnels of water. This is the impression left on my mind by Thebes : shady streets, running waters, and a sense of leisurely industry. The booths on either side of the street were open, the copper-smiths and tin-smiths clanged their hammers ; occasionally a man or dog strolled across the road. The town was awake and was alive, but that was all that could be said. Business was certainly not brisk.

And this was Thebes, the great rival of Athens in Frankish as in Hellenic days. Except for the dismantled Castle of St. Omer at the lower end of the town there seemed little to distinguish it from any other country town in Greece.

Legends cluster round Thebes as thickly as round the Acropolis of Athens. Here Cadmus reigned and Œdipus, and here King Pentheus, who was torn limb from limb by the Bacchic rout ; and here Alcestis gave her life. Considering the intense and bitter rivalry that existed between Athens and Thebes during the whole of the classical period, it would be strange to find the Athenian playwrights so often taking legends of Thebes for the theme of their drama, were it not that it is always easier to focus the rays of romance on the horizon rather than on the well-known homeland. Turning from the Thebes of classical times, two pictures of the later life of the city have come down to us. The first dates from the second century before Christ and shows us the capital of Bœotia in its gay, turbulent everyday aspect, full of quarrelsome men and pleasing women.

“In spite of its antiquity the streets are new, because

as the histories tell us the city has been thrice razed to the ground on account of the morose and overbearing character of its inhabitants. It is excellent for the breeding of horses; it is all well watered and green, and has more gardens than any other city in Greece. For two rivers flow through it, irrigating the plain below the city; and water is brought from the Cadmea in underground conduits which were made of old, they say, by Cadmus. So much for the city. The inhabitants are high spirited and wonderfully sanguine, but rash, insolent, and overbearing, ready to come to blows with any man, be he citizen or stranger. As for justice, they set their face against it. Business disputes are settled not by reason but by fisticuffs, and the methods of the prize-ring are transferred to courts of justice. Hence lawsuits here last thirty years at the very least. For if a man opens his lips in public on the law's delay and does not thereupon take hasty leave of Bœotia he is waylaid by night and murdered by the persons who have no wish that lawsuits should come to an end. Murders are perpetrated on the most trifling pretexts. Such are the men as a whole, though some worthy, high-minded, respectable people are to be found among them. The women are the tallest, prettiest, and most graceful of all Greece. Their faces are so muffled up that only the eyes are seen. All of them dress in white and wear low purple shoes laced so as to show the bare feet. Their yellow hair is tied up in a knot on the top of the head. In society their manners are Sicyonian rather than Bœotian. They have pleasing voices, while the voices of the men are harsh and deep." So much for Dicæarchus. I quote from Frazer's translation of the passage.

The second picture shows the town in the hands of the gay Burgundians, who settled here in the thirteenth century. Thebes was then the centre of the silk industry,

and wealthy merchants from the East and from the West lived under the protection of that tower and enjoyed the glitter of the Latin chivalry or suffered from its strife. Here is a record of one of the summer days of Thebes. The year is 1294, and the occasion is the coming of age of Guy de la Roche, Duke of Athens and Thebes. "There came a day when the young Duke of Athens would take upon himself the order of knighthood, and he called the *cortés* of the whole country and commanded that on the day of St. John in June all the noblemen in his duchy should present themselves in the town of Thebes, where the Duke was to be knighted. He convoked also the prelates and all other good people. Finally he made a proclamation throughout the Empire, in the Despotate,¹ and in all Wallachia, that all men who wished to come there had only to present themselves, when they would receive from him gifts and graces. This great court was proclaimed at least six months before its time of meeting.

"At the time then, when the Duke called his full court, each one made haste to prepare beautiful clothes for himself and for his suite, and also to distribute them among his jongleurs in order that they might give lustre to his court. How shall I tell you of it? The day of the great court arrived, and in all the court there was nobody more elegantly and more nobly dressed than Messire Boniface² and his company. He had a hundred candles bearing his arms. He borrowed the wherewithal to cover his expenses, pledging his pay in advance. How shall I tell it to you? The feast began after a splendid fashion. When people had arrived in the great church where the Duke was to receive the order of chivalry, the Archbishop of Thebes celebrated

¹ Epirus.

² Son of the Lord of Verona. He had come penniless to Athens and had been taken into favour by the late Duke.

Mass and the arms of the Duke were placed upon the altar. Every one waited anxiously for the moment when the Duke would receive the order of knighthood, and they were all making a great to-do and supposing that the King of France and the Emperor must have been disputing for the honour of having the Duke receive knighthood of his hands. And at this moment, when they were all in suspense, he summoned Messire Boniface of Verona. He presented himself instantly, and the Duke said, 'Messire Boniface, sit here near the Archbishop, because I desire that you should dub us Knight.'

"'Ah, my Lord!' replied Boniface, 'what sayest thou? Thou dost surely mock me.' 'No, by our troth,' quoth the Duke, 'so do we wish it to be.' Then Boniface, seeing that the Duke spoke from his heart, came and stood near the Archbishop at the altar whereon lay the arms of the Duke and dubbed him a knight. Then the Duke said aloud before all the company, 'Master Boniface, custom is that those who make men knights should make them presents too. Howsobeit, it is our will to do the contrary. Thou hast made us a knight, therefore we give thee from this moment 50,000 sols of revenue for thee and thine for ever, in castles and in goodly places and in freehold, to do therewith as thou wilt. We also give thee to wife the daughter of a certain baron whose hand is ours to bestow and who is lady of part of the island and city of Negropont.'"

So writes Ramon Muntaner, with his gift for making fairy tales out of history. I am dependent for the translation from the extracts of the chronicle made by Mr. William Miller in his stirring account of the Latins in the Levant.

CHAPTER X

THE DARK AGES

I

TURKISH ATHENS

THE Byzantine Room in the National Museum at Athens contains a number of picturesque and curious relics of the period of Turkish and Venetian rule. There are altar-cloths, vestments, chalices, glowing pictures on wood and dark metal-covered *ikons*. The influence of Venice is strongly marked in the embroideries and paintings. The Battle of Lepanto is set forth in great detail on a picture from the Church of Santa Maria della Vittoria in Cephalonia. To the right is the Turkish fleet with the crescents on its flags. Some of its ships are already on fire. There are shells bursting among them and some Turks are in the sea. It is evidently the moment of victory. The Christians are on the left, their flags displaying the double eagle of Austria, the lion of Venice, and the crossed keys of Rome. In the bottom left of the picture some Turks are brought as prisoners to Don John. The scene is evidently drawn from the description of an eye-witness and probably conveys much exact information.

Beyond these few relics in the Museum, little visible is left of the period of Venetian occupation. It is an unfortunate paradox that the Venetians who championed

the cause of progress and enlightenment have left but one memorial in Athens itself, and that of a disastrously negative character. It was while Venice was besieging the Turks in the Acropolis in 1687 that the fatal shot was fired which caused the destruction of the Parthenon. Until that day the structure of the temple had remained in good preservation, though its ornament was partially damaged. The explosion caused by the cannonade of 26th September tore away the roof and shattered the giant colonnades on each side. Nor can it be urged in plea that the destruction was wrought by a random shot. A deserter had informed the Venetian captain, Morosini, that the Turks were using the Parthenon as their powder-magazine, and it was in the hope of causing an explosion that the Venetian guns were trained on to it. Though Morosini was barbarian enough to sanction¹ the bombardment of the Parthenon, he was still enough of a connoisseur in matters of art to covet the marble horses from the chariot of Athena in the West pediment. By his orders these were removed from their places. Unhappily as they were being lowered the ropes gave way and the statues were dashed into fragments. The greed of the collector no less than the wantonness of the soldier is thus answerable for the destruction of the most perfect monument of Greek art. Having failed to secure the horses, Morosini carried to Venice three of the famous Athenian lions. The great lion from the Piræus, whose runic inscription told that it was set up by the Northmen, the lion that crouched in the plain near the temple of Theseus,² and a lioness of Hymettan marble, were all carried to Venice and may still be seen guarding the arsenal there.

¹ It was Count Königsmark of Westphalia who actually initiated the attack.

² See plan of Athens by the Capuchins, 1670, given by Laborde, i. 78.

The explosion in the Parthenon seems to have given rise to the idea that the whole of Athens was laid low. Chandler and other subsequent travellers are almost naïve in their astonishment at finding any of the buildings of antiquity above ground.

Except during the brief spell, 1687-1715, while Venice occupied Athens, the town was under Turkish rule from 1453 to 1821. These centuries were to Athens her real "Dark Ages," darker even than the slow period of decline under Byzantine rule. For now she was not only dead, but forgotten. Even her name had vanished. The Piræus was known only as Porto Leone, called after the marble lion that Morosini carried to Venice. The name of Athens became corrupted past recognition. William Lithgow, who visited the town in 1609, records its name as Salenos. Wheler, in the same century, more accurately gives the form Settines, with the following explanation: "They" (the inhabitants) "still call the city 'Αθήνη, which they pronounce 'Athini.' Therefore I wonder our modern geographers have been no better informed concerning so eminent a place, calling it corruptly in our maps, sometimes Saithenes, otherwise Setines or Satina, etc., deceived, as I have before observed, by the ignorant seamen who, hearing the Greeks say εἰς τὴν 'Αθηνῶν, they pronounce 'Stin Athini,' and have found those barbarous names out of their own brains."

As her name had vanished from the map of Europe, so also it was blotted out from history. The glories of the Renaissance, the struggles of the Reformation, the rise and fall of dynasties, the whole course of history while modern Europe was in the making, raised no echo in her mountains. The tide of commerce sent no ripple to her shores. The great harbour of the Piræus remained empty of all save a few fishing craft or the occasional hull of a coasting vessel bearing an inquisitive traveller who wished to see for himself the reported desertion and

destruction of that which had been Athens. It is the records of these chance visitors that alone throw light on her condition in this time of isolation ; thanks to them the Dark Ages are brightened with gleams of colour.

There is William Lithgow, of the boisterous buccaneering type, inaccurate in his geography and terrifying in his adventures. His books give pictures of the author "beset with six murderers in Moldavia" ; "in irons at the Governor's palace at Malaga," and again "in the Racke at Malaga." His account of Athens is probably fairly reliable since he does not trouble to be romantic here. He merely notes the smallness of the town and the courteous hospitality of its inhabitants. He is the type of traveller whose own personality looms large, and the countries through which he travels are but a picturesque background against which he may pose. Almost his contemporary in travel comes Sandys, who made his Eastern tour in 1610, seeking no "rare adventures" such as Lithgow's, but delighting to study the ways and customs of the country-folk, the herbage and scenery of the country. He visits Chios and is delighted with the gay spirit of the Greeks even under Turkish misgovernment. "The inhabitants for the most part are Turkes and Grecians, these living in command, and loosely : the other husbanding the earth, and exceeding them infinitely in number. They are in a manner released of their thraldome, in that they are insensible of it : well meriting the name of Merry Greeks, when their leisure will tolerate. Never Sunday or holy day passes without some publicke meeting or other : where intermixed with women they dance out the day, and with full crownd cups strengthen their jollitie. The streets do almost all the night long partake of their musicke."

De la Guilletiere (1676) claims that he visited Greece after two years' warfare in Hungary and four years' slavery in Barbary. These had so "much diminished the ardent

passion for travel which was once the mortal malady of his spirit" that the enthusiasm of the party of savants whom he accompanies becomes irksome to him and he longs "only to sleep for a year or two." The pathos of this falls flat when we discover that the book is not really written by the ex-slave but by his stay-at-home brother.

Then there is Babin, the gentle French priest who prefers the cities to wild country travel, and has left us a careful description of all he saw in Athens (1674).

There is Wheler, the English Royalist, perhaps the first traveller to visit Attica in a truly scientific spirit (1682). His records are full and accurate, while the personalities and adventures of his journey are lightly passed over. With him went Dr. Spon, of Lyons. The two savants each published an account of his travels, and with exquisite politeness placed the name of his fellow-traveller as joint author on the title-page. The two accounts are not, however, identical, and it is necessary to distinguish between the volume by Spon and Wheler, which was published in French and afterwards translated, and that by Wheler and Spon, which was published in English and then translated into French. Wheler's book was produced some years after the French account by Spon, and he prides himself on his drawings of plants and on his numerous maps. The little engravings are certainly delightful.

Travel in the near East was popular from this time onward. There is gossip as well as scholarship in Chandler, who travelled in 1765 on behalf of the Society of Dilettanti and took with him draughtsmen "to make plans, measures, drawings, and copy inscriptions." That he did not confine himself to the antiquities of Athens is shown by the following minute description of the Greek belle at home, in which he catalogues her charms as carefully as if he were making an inventory for his society :—

"The Greek will sometimes admit a traveller into his *gynecæum*, or the apartment of his women. There the girl, like Thetis, treading on a soft carpet, has her white and delicate feet naked ; the nails tinged with red. Her trowsers, which in winter are of red cloth and in summer of fine calico or thin gauze, descend from the hip to the ankle, hanging loosely about her limbs ; the lower portion embroidered with flowers and appearing beneath the shift, which has the sleeves wide and open, and the sleeves and edges curiously adorned with needlework. Her vest is of silk, fitted exactly to the form of the bosom and the shape of the body which it rather covers than conceals, and is shorter than the shift. The sleeves button occasionally to the hand, and are lined with red or yellow satin. A rich zone encompasses her waist, and is fastened before by clasps of silver gilded or of gold set with precious stones. Over the vest is a robe, in summer lined with ermine and in cold weather with fur. The head-dress is a skull-cap, red or green, with pearls ; a stay under the chin and a yellow forehead cloth. She has bracelets of gold on her wrists, and, like Aurora, is rosy-fingered, the tips being stained. Her necklace is a string of Zechins, a species of gold coin, or of the pieces called Byzantines. At her cheeks is a lock of hair made to curl towards the face ; and down her back falls a profusion of tresses, spreading over her shoulders. Much time is consumed in combing and braiding the hair after bathing, and at the greater festivals in enriching and powdering it with small bits of silver gilded, resembling a violin in shape and woven in at regular distances. She is painted blue round the eyes ; and the insides of the sockets, with the edges on which the lashes grow, are tinged with black."

There is a picture of the Maid of Athens to whom Byron's pretty verses were addressed. It shows her in this same Greek dress, and a very becoming fashion it must have been.

In the early nineteenth century, besides Gell, who continued Chandler's work, there is that whole memorable group of young travellers, Byron, Hobhouse, Galt, and Dodwell, whose descriptions of Greece roused England to share their enthusiasm, and many others whose dusty journals are found in the libraries of the period. These books are always worth opening. Among minute descriptions of places visited and tedious collections of classical quotations there lurk gems of humour and insight, romantic incidents, and personal experiences. This was the period when every "young man of parts" was expected to complete his education by a tour in Europe, and Byron's popularity led many to imitate him by turning their steps to the Turkish Empire. Not all, however, showed Byron's insight into the political condition of Greece. It was easier to laugh at her obvious degradation than to see any hope for her future greatness. Typical of this light-hearted attitude of scorn are the amusing journals of Galt, a facetious young Scot who gained some fame as a novelist.

In reading Byron's letters from Athens it is rather a shock to find that while sympathizing with the Greeks as a nation it was the Romantic rather than the Classical Greece that appealed to him. He paid two visits here as a young man, first in the winter and afterwards in the summer of 1810. On neither occasion do his published letters mention the classical buildings on the Acropolis. He wrote magnificent poetry about the sunset, but it was the landscape rather than the temples that he immortalized. "Place me on Sunium's marbled steep," he sings; and when his wish has been fulfilled it is his own name that he cuts on one of those immortal Doric columns, while the fallen columns of the temple to Jupiter Olympus are mentioned chiefly as a convenient seat.

The travellers of this time either lodged with their Consul or with the hospitable brothers in the Capuchin

convent into which has been built the Monument of Lysicrates (see p. 161). There was no suitable "hostelry" in the town, probably nothing more than a Turkish khan. The "Catholic missionaries" were glad to add to their funds by putting up travellers and the travellers also were pleased to date their letters and journals from the "Lantern of Demosthenes" (as the Monument of Lysicrates was then called). It made a small but romantic study, that little circular room with its roof of marble laurel leaves. Galt makes merry over the rusty gates outside the convent giving way at a touch of "his Reverence's toe." Dodwell interrupts his learned disquisitions on flora, fauna, and buildings to relate the exciting story of the fugitive Disdar whom he sheltered for weeks in his own room at the Capuchin convent. The story goes thus :—

When Dodwell visited the Acropolis he was scornfully received by the Governor, a haughty man who was "frequently seen galloping through the streets of Athens and endangering the lives and limbs of the passengers. The Disdar (as he was called) was easily distinguished at a distance, as he was mounted on a white horse with its tail and mane dyed of an orange colour and was attended by other horsemen who played on the violin when they rode." This outrageous behaviour tended to make him unpopular among the quiet and dignified Turkish citizens, but they bore with him until a more scandalous proceeding brought their fury to a climax. Like Actæon he violated the privacy of Diana and peeped at the Turkish ladies in their enjoyment of the public bath. After this he was forced to fly for his life. After taking refuge in the islands of Ægina and Hydra he returned to Athens and threw himself upon the mercy of the Catholic convent. "Night had closed the entrance of the monastery, and we had all retired to our apartments for repose, when we were suddenly alarmed

by a loud rapping at the gate. A stranger in the street, in the tone of earnest supplication and of deep distress, implored an immediate admission within the sacred walls. But as the circumstances were so singular and the interruption so extraordinary we thought it right to arm ourselves before we ventured to unbar the door. This was no sooner accomplished than a tall figure made his appearance, whose face was muffled up in the folds of his mantle, which he no sooner developed, than the Disdar, pale as a culprit and humble as a mendicant, presented himself to our astonished sight ! He kissed the beard of the prior ; and with abject servility implored asylum in the convent. But the wary Capuchin, not daring to risk the consequence of a discovery, repressed the compassion which he felt, and refused the favour which was so vehemently urged. The Disdar then had recourse to me, forgetting the little civility with which he had treated me when he commanded the Acropolis. But he now besought my compassion in a manner so humble and affecting that I interested myself unfeignedly in his behalf ; and after some difficulty, obtained the permission of Father Urban, to conceal him in one of my apartments, where he was suffered to remain till I left Athens." The next act in this drama begins with the Disdar warmly entreating Dodwell to allow him a sight of his wife and children. After some difficulty it is arranged that Dodwell shall lead them to the eastern battlement of the Acropolis while the Disdar watched for them with a telescope from the window of the convent ! Kind Dodwell brings the wife to that which we now know as the Belvedere Bastion and from here she sees below her and perhaps a quarter of a mile away her husband with the telescope at his eye. "This unexpected sight of one whom she appears to have tenderly loved was too much for her natural, unaffected sensibility. She uttered a scream of joy and fainted in my arms."

Such adventures were there for travellers in the good days of old.

Quite apart from all recollections of Dodwell and the Disdar's wife, this Belvedere Bastion is a fine place for observation. It crowns the scarped cliff of the Eastern end of the Acropolis and gives a bird's-eye view of the brown-tiled roofs of Turkish Athens. Nothing could be more striking than the contrast between the modern town with its broad streets laid out at right angles, bordered with high white houses, and this older town with crooked shady lanes and low houses built each around its own courtyard garden. It was in this Turkish town that Finlay the historian and General Church lived side by side, disappointed Philhellenes, who spent their old age lecturing the country that they had tried to serve. General Church's house is marked by a square tower, and beside it Finlay's garden has two conspicuous palm-trees. The houses are easier to find in a bird's-eye view from the Acropolis than on foot, for these winding streets bordered with high walls become a labyrinth when one is down among them.

Whatever faults the Turks possessed they knew how to make their homes pleasant. Fountains and greenery mark their old haunts. The Botanic Gardens that now lie on the outskirts of the town on the road to Eleusis were originally the residence of the Vaivode. The villa that Queen Amalia afterwards cultivated was first the country home of a wealthy Moslem. The gardenlike suburb of Cephissia was the creation of Turkish land-owners. The old town itself had many cypresses and palms, and old pictures show some of the narrow lanes covered with a trelliswork of vines. At one time there was also a number of fountains throughout the town. Unfortunately Greek patriotism found even these relics of Turkish rule hateful and they are now destroyed.

The old engravings of the seventeenth and eighteenth

centuries show Athens as a small group of houses clustered under the Acropolis, of which the most conspicuous feature is the high Frankish tower on the Propylæa. Mosques and minarets and occasional trees beautify the otherwise insignificant little town. The descriptions of travellers give the same impression. The town has so far shrunk back from the old walls that corn is now reaped within the line of the city. Galt in 1810 says: "I cannot describe the modern city of Athens in fewer words than by saying that it looks as if two or three ill-built villages had been rudely swept together at the foot of the North side of the Acropolis and enclosed by a garden wall three or four miles in circumference." A second town was crowded among the old buildings on the Acropolis. Here the garrison and their families lived. The Governor also had his residence here, and the Erechtheum served as his harem. These families living on the Acropolis were known as the *Castriotes*. They were much pitied by their neighbours in the town below. Water was scarce and the situation said to be too "airy." The classical monuments around them counted for less than nothing, except when the marble fragments could be turned to practical uses. Here on the Belvedere Bastion, among a heap of broken carvings bearing classical or Byzantine designs, one comes across an Ionic capital that has once served as a washing-trough. A pool is hollowed out at one end and the remainder given a convenient slope on which the linen could be rubbed with stones. No doubt these *Castriotes* had household furniture made largely of marble fragments, as in the classical sites to-day where one sees fodder stored in a sarcophagus and a column base used as a table.

The Englishman on his grand tour found it none too easy to visit the Acropolis and identify the old buildings. The old journals tell us how it was managed. First the traveller had to make a gift of tea and sugar to the



THE BAZAAR OF TURKISH ATHENS
AFTER DODWELL, "VIEWS IN GREECE," (1821)

Governor. This done, he passed the green-turbaned sentinel smoking at the entrance and strode over the ancient Propylæa where the earth and fallen stones had risen as high as the ancient doorway. The sites here were covered with "rubbish and mean walls." Threading his way among the small houses he would recognize the Parthenon on his right, with minaret and cupola showing that it was now used as a mosque, and on his left the darkened front of the Erechtheum, but nothing else was visible to remind him of the glorious days of old. The rest of the hill-top was covered with small dwelling-houses. Descending to the lower town he would find the narrow and irregular streets which Hobhouse describes, having "a raised causeway on both sides so broad as to contract the middle of the street into a kind of dirty gutter." These streets were strewn with refuse from the olive-press, which served the inhabitants for fuel. The bazaars we are told were "far from well-furnished," could not take rank in fact with the cheerful commercial quarter of wealthier cities. The silence struck the traveller strangely. There was no sound of wheels or horses' hoofs. The slippered tread of the Oriental fell without noise. The coffee-houses were full of Turks playing at draughts or chess, while the hard-working Greek hurried nimbly by. If the traveller trusted himself outside the town and ventured as far afield as the banks of the Ilissus he would find himself looked upon as a hardy adventurer. Witches haunted the Stadium, especially the cavern under the hill that was once included in its structure. Hobhouse was brought here by a guide who told him that these witches had often been seen "during a midnight storm, skimming off the foam of the sea where it rolls against the long, pebbly beach near the ancient port of Phalerus." Galt tells us that "on the first evening of the new moon young girls put honey, salt, and bread on a plate which they leave

on the bank of the Ilissus near the Stadium, muttering some ancient words of which the meaning has been forgotten, but which are to the effect that fate may send them a pretty young man."

Every mention of this region shows that it was regarded as mysterious and remote. The Piræus of those days seems also to have been quite in the wilds. "A few barks with their long tops bearing the furled sail at the mast-head were moored close to the land ; on the shore stood a dirty hovel dignified with the name of warehouse ; a muddy marsh extended towards the left ; there a few cranes seeking their scanty food interrupted now and then the heavy silence with the flapping of their wings." Such is the scene of desolation noted by a classical scholar of the early nineteenth century. There was a lake and a marsh two and a half miles in length between the port and the town. It seems to have been the usual thing for the young Englishman who came here to take his gun and go after the wild turkeys that abounded. In the harbour there was seldom a ship, and eight small houses on the edge of the shore represented what is now the busy port of Piræus. Hobhouse is no scoffer, and without irony he suggests that Athens will soon be provided with a tavern. He seems, however, to be indulging in satire when he adds "a few more years may furnish the Piræus with all the accommodations of a fashionable watering-place."

As far as the actual condition of the people was concerned, Athens seems to have suffered equally under her Venetian and under her Ottoman masters. The hand of the Turk was perhaps the heaviest, yet he maintained better internal order and his friendly attitude to the Greek Church contrasted favourably with the jealousy shown towards it by Venetian Catholicism. During the earlier centuries of Turkish rule it was more stupidity than cruelty from which Greece had to suffer. The

Turk's shortsighted trade regulations crippled her commerce as his heavy taxation discouraged her industry. In some ways Greece suffered less from fiscal exaction than other provinces under Turkish rule, yet the fact remains that during the four centuries of Ottoman occupation the economic condition of Greece steadily declined in spite of all her rich natural resources.

The social tyrannies of the Turk were those that counted most heavily against him when the day of reckoning came. A family whose daughter had been forced into a Turkish harem remembered the insult for generations. The yearly tribute of Christian children taken from their parents and carried off to Constantinople to swell the ranks of the Janissaries was an evil the memory of which never cooled, though the custom was discontinued in the seventeenth century. Eton's Survey of the Turkish Empire in the end of the eighteenth century gives instances of the exasperating petty tyrannies that were harder to bear than cruelty. A Christian on horseback must dismount as soon as he came in sight of a Turk. He must wear clothes of dark colours, slippers of dark colour, and must paint his house black or brown. In pictures of this date the broad red sash and red boots denote the Turk as unmistakably as his fez. Bishops and other ecclesiastics were forbidden to wear the broad-brimmed hats which custom had assigned them. Hence the peculiar brimless hats still worn by the Greek clergy.

To-day these frivolous regulations make us smile, but to the Greek any breach in their observance was punishable with death. And for all this tyranny the Turks were not able to give Greece security from her enemies. Brigands in the mountains and pirates at sea helped to deprive the peasants of the few possessions their masters had left them. If a man had saved a little money he must bury it. If he wished to escape suspicion he must

avoid the appearance of living in easy circumstances. Wheler speaks of the ravages of the Corsairs causing such loss to the town of Athens that at last the citizens having no walls were obliged to build barriers and gates across all roads leading from the town to the sea. Down to the last the Turk refused to see that his own interests suffered from this impoverishment of the Greek race. Blind as he was to the commercial and agricultural possibilities of the country he ruled, it was not to be expected that he would recognize the value—even the monetary value—of the art treasures of Athens. Not only the Parthenon, but also apparently the Erechtheum, the Pinakotheke, and the Nike temple, all served as powder-magazines at one time or another. The Nike temple even had a house built over its roof, and here in the eighteenth century the Governor of the Acropolis lived until the explosion of the magazine beneath caused the destruction of himself and his family. In 1759 the Vainode of Athens, while building the mosque in the bazaar, carried off the marbles from the old Metropolitan Church and even blew up a couple of columns of Hadrian's Stoa that happened to encroach on the ground-plan of his building. Travellers found that it was often dangerous to offer a Turk money for any relic of antiquity. Incapable of understanding that an object of art could be valued for its own sake, the owner at once assumed that the bidder must know of hidden treasure inside it, and under this insane belief many old marbles seem to have been destroyed.

Knowing that the Turks were incapable of valuing the treasures of art, Europeans who did value them scrambled for the spoil. We have seen how Morosini treated the sculptures on the Parthenon, and if Lord Elgin's ravages are less blameworthy it is only because they were more successful. He knew at any rate how to cherish the treasures he removed. It is easy to abuse his memory

and to quote the inscription on the Parthenon : "Quod non fecerunt Gothi hoc fecerunt Scoti" ; but it must be remembered that in his day the question was not whether the British Museum or an Athenian museum should hold them, but rather whether they should be looted by an enlightened or an unenlightened thief.

There were plenty of others ready to take what he left. As early as the seventeenth century noblemen in England had their agents collecting marbles and bronzes for them in Italy and Greece. Quite recently there has come to light in the Bodleian Library an amusing memorandum jotted down for the guidance of such an agent. Although unsigned, the notes seem to have been made by a certain William Petty, who collected a great number of art treasures for the Earl of Arundel. We know that Sir Thomas Roe was serving the Duke of Buckingham in the same capacity at the same time.

Petty's notes begin abruptly : "The things to be sought for bee these followinge : Statues clothed and naked but the naked ones are of greatest value. Heads of all sorts that can be found ; Marbles carved with halfe-round figures which are called Basso Relevo ; Pili of marble histored, the which are like trought of marble carved with figures. . . . Likewise Beasts of all kinds for Tombs and Sepulchers. . . . All things of Brass worke that can be found as Statues, Heads, Peeeces of Basso Relevo, and likewise all little figures in Brass, or Lampes, Vazes, Instruments for sacrifice, medalls or whatsoever else can be gotten if they be of metal are of great value." He then goes on to discuss the places where such things are likely to be discovered, and shows amazing insight by suggesting those very places that have most repaid the digger : Olympia, Delphi, Delos, Ephesus, Pergamum. Then follows practical suggestions of great wile : "He that is imployed must alwaies weare poore apparrell for by that meanes the Turks will imagine the things he seeks

for to be of no great estima \bar{c} on. He must never be without great store of tobacco and English knives to present the Turks withal, who are Governors of places and other Offices with whom he shall have to doe : for this small presents together with his show of povertie will save him from manie troubles which otherwise might happen. The men that he imployes to digg he must pay by the daie, and if he meet with anie Statues or Colossus too great to be carryed away whole he *must imploy men to saw it asunder with iron sawes and sharpe sand.*" ¹

After reading directions such as these Lord Elgin begins to appear in a rather different light.

The Turks seem to have been insanely jealous of such monuments as escaped the spoiler's hand. The "Theseion," by no means one of the most beautiful of Greek temples, is one that stands almost intact even at the present day. Babin tells us that it was too far from the town to be useful as a mosque, but the Turks did not like the Christians "to say their prayers in so magnificent a church." "The iron doors are never opened except perhaps on St. George's Day" "when the lock is turned with a silver key which the Greeks had to give to the Turks in order to obtain permission to use the church at all." Another legend says that the Turks used to ride their horses up and down the steps in order to defile the temple-church for the Christians.

II

THE ATHENS OF KING OTHO

IN THE ROYAL GARDENS

No one really knows Athens until he has explored the beauties of the great garden behind the Palace. There is no place quite like it. It might perhaps be compared

¹ For the full text see a paper by Miss R. Poole in the *Classical Review*, June, 1912.

with Count Antonio's garden at Biskra, but whereas from there the green vistas frame a distance of desert, here the *koukunaria* pines break their ranks to show the white columns of the Olympieum and the sea behind. This garden is open to the public for two afternoons in the week, and as far as one can see the king's kindness is not abused. There are spaces beneath the Palace windows where no one thinks of venturing, and the garden is large enough to absorb a good number of visitors without appearing to have any one in it. There are wooded solitudes carpeted with periwinkle or amaranth; there are broad gravel-walks and flower-beds gay with tulip and anemone. In another part of the garden are acres of dark orange-trees hanging their lamps of winter gold, and underneath the orange-trees are thick borders of violets, whose leaves scent the air even when there are no flowers. In April, when the violets are out and the orange-trees in flower, it is like a fragrant paradise of the Arabian Nights. Towards the bottom of the garden the trees increase in size. Here are groups of pines and giant cypresses. There are tall palms, euonymus, and bay, and a hundred other evergreens, and among them a few bare planes. Over the ground and up the tree-trunks the ivy riots. The frail monthly rose hangs in garlands from tree to tree and the banksia tumbles in cataracts of yellow foam down the dark spire of a monster cypress. This profusion of creepers, contrasting with the trim orderliness of the walks where not a leaf or weed is seen, gives the garden a peculiar charm.

There are other flowers here too : little girls and boys with olive skins and dark eyes ; little diplomatic babies in white perambulators, or a blue-smocked English child from the favoured nurseries that are allowed to use this paradise as their daily playground. The garden is large and the children are few. Those who know their special haunts may find them by the pond of goldfish or under

the plumbago pergola. For the most part they are invisible and only faintly, deliciously audible.

This garden is a token of what can be done in Athens by a plentiful use of water. The light soil has still some magic fertility that makes everything grow luxuriantly—everything at least that can count on regular irrigation.

When King Otho came here as a boy with his girl-bride, they lived in the little house beside the Palace, now used for the guards in their white fustanellas. Their quarters were small and hardly royal, but they consoled themselves with laying out this beautiful garden, which remains as the most amiable landmark of their rule. One gets a sufficiently vivid idea of the Athens of King Otho in the letters of Sir Thomas Wyse, who was for many years the English minister there. They are edited by his niece, who prefaces the volume with her own picturesque impressions of Athens in the forties. To mark the new era of freedom the Albanian dress had been adopted as the national costume. The King himself always wore this and the Queen wore the costume of a Greek lady. The streets of the town were full of the *Palikars*, the chieftains who had fought for Greece and now strode about with the air of conquerors, with their hair hanging in long ringlets, and curling moustachios such as one learns to know in the portrait gallery at the Polytechnic Museum. With short jackets heavily embroidered with gold, swinging white kilts, and broad rolls of coloured cloth round their loins, these free Greeks did their utmost to mark the contrast between the new times and those old days when the subject population walked humbly in sad colours.

Elements of disorder these *Palikars* undoubtedly were. For the most part they had once been brigands. They had fought bravely during the war, but now finding themselves without employment they were rapidly lapsing into their old courses. Nevertheless the Govern-

ment and especially the King and Queen still regarded them as a power in the state, and the most lawless were the most petted. The descriptions left by Sir Thomas Wyse remind us of the manners of the Highland Chiefs in Edinburgh in the eighteenth century : "No one who saw Theodore Grivas can ever forget the sight. With a wild, audacious countenance, defiant of all around, wearing the handsomest of Greek dresses, covered with gold and embroidery, his great pride was to strut up and down the Patissia Road followed by ten or eleven rude savage-looking retainers."

The streets of Athens were still ill-paved and ill-lighted. Those who went out after dark must take a servant to carry a lantern before them to guide them over the broken roads. The size of the lantern was carefully proportioned to the importance of its owner, and after a court ball or any special function the streets were brilliant with the large horned lights of ministers and officials. At this time building was beginning, though the town grew but slowly. The first Palace was, as we have seen, a very humble one. Queen Amalia was a great gardener, and to-day the town rejoices in many groves originally planted by her wish.

Many strangers came to settle in Athens at this time, attracted to the country mostly for sentimental reasons. The foreign capital that they brought into the impoverished country was welcome, and their houses are still visible in Athens and the neighbourhood. The historian Finlay bought an estate on the eastern slopes of Deceleia, but like many others at this time he found country life impossible, owing to the disorderly state of the country. His house can still be seen on the left-hand side of the railway as one journeys to Chalcis.

The Duchess of Plaisance was another well-known figure. A Frenchwoman, born in Philadelphia, she had married one of Napoleon's first ministers, and after her

husband's death she came to Athens as a wealthy widow. Her enthusiasm for the Greek nation led her to adopt a kind of classical Greek costume, and she was often seen out driving with a large white veil over her head, her draperies fastened on the shoulder with a fibula, and a fluffy cream-coloured dog stretched on the seat opposite to her. Her passion for Greece was equalled only by her fear of death, and she held the common superstition that so long as she could have some piece of building on hand death would be averted. To this strange fancy is due the number of houses begun by her but left unfinished, for the moment of completion was in her eyes the moment of danger. She built two large houses on Pentelicus and on Hymettus, and a villa on the Cephissia Road, now used as barracks, was once hers. At Chalandri she built a public washing-place to show her gratitude to the peasants there, who once saved her from brigands.

The Cephissia Road is the great artery leading from Athens to the hill regions round Pentelicus. As it leaves the town it is bordered with royal palaces, foreign legations, and the houses of wealthy Athenians. A little further out the road is lined with soldiers' barracks. The first of these that you pass on the right-hand side was the villa built by the Duchess of Plaisance. Designed in the Italian style with deep recessed arcades, it must have been a charming home when set round with grass and flowers and trees. The word *Ilissia* written in large letters over its beautiful arched gateway was meant to usher us into a paradise on the banks of the Ilissus. Even to-day, with its trodden courtyard filled with the litter of artillery barracks, it keeps something of its original charm.

CHAPTER XI

MODERN ATHENS

A CITY of whiteness and brightness. A city of sun and wind, of mountain freshness, and dazzling, sun-dried air. This is how Athens strikes the traveller from northern lands. For the city that first greets him is the modern Athens with its broad, straight, shadeless streets, its blocks of high white houses geometrically arranged, and its open squares filled with orange-trees and date-palms. The old town that lies tucked away between Hermes Street and the Acropolis has to be discovered later. With its winding shady lanes, low houses, windowless to the street, and pleasant hidden courtyards, Turkish Athens seems like a town apart. To step across the street that divides it from the new town is to step back a century into the world of Byron and Hobhouse and Cochrane and Church.

Athens, the modern town, may lack romance, but instead she has her own gaiety and charm. The city is still in her first vigorous youth. She is still divided between contradictory aspirations. On the one hand she strives to renew the glories of ancient Hellas, while on the other she sees herself the Paris of the East, "le petit Paris," as Athenians affectionately call her. Nor are these ideals eventually irreconcilable. Why should not Athens borrow the shady boulevards and gay squares of Paris, without sacrificing her Hellenic traditions? Though the reconciliation has not yet been attained,

much has already been accomplished. Think of her as she was in the middle of the last century—"a rickety agglomeration of larger and smaller huts" is the epithet bestowed on her by one traveller of King Otho's time. In two generations she has grown from a mere nothing to the flourishing modern city of to-day. The rapidity of her growth explains the contrast between the evident prosperity of the town and the marked deficiencies of public convenience. Obvious reforms, such as a better water supply and better roads are bound to be accomplished shortly if no misfortune interrupts the course of tranquil development. In appearance also Athens is still unfinished. The symmetry of the principal streets is marred by the building that is perpetually going forward; and is anything more unsightly than the processes of modern building? Grant that no political jealousy interferes with the scheme of the new railway to Salonika, it will link Athens to the continental system, and then the stream of travellers to the Far East, who now pour across Europe to Naples or Brindisi, may well prefer to shorten their sea voyage by taking the train to Athens and embarking at Piræus.

Nor is progress to be deplored on sentimental grounds. The Acropolis lifts its treasures above the reach of all modern improvements. A high standard of comfort and efficiency in the modern town will not render the traveller less able to appreciate the glory of the ruins. It is impossible for new Athens ever to have that flavour of miscellaneous antiquity which charms in Rome. Therefore, since she must remain modern, let her modernity be of the best.

Think of the joy of a town where coal is dear and marble is cheap. The main roads are now bordered with fine houses of white stucco, a paste made of powdered marble and quite different from the gloomy stucco of English towns. Their balconies, porticoes,

and wide entrance-stairs shine with Pentelic marble. Instead of the unhappy-looking gardens that fringe our English towns these Athenian villas are surrounded by deep groves of cypress, acacia, pepper, and orange-trees. Wherever water is to be had trees and flowers grow luxuriantly. The Royal Garden has set a high standard for its neighbours.

Down the broad avenues pepper-trees have been planted. Unfortunately these trees cast their leaves in the spring and look most dishevelled in the tourist season. Through the winter their feathery green branches and tiny red berries turn the boulevards into groves. Their loveliness inspired Isidora Duncan, the American dancer, to an impromptu performance one fine winter day, and I am continually grateful for the memory of her white draperies whirling light-heartedly down the long avenue before what was then the Crown Prince's Palace.

The wealth of marble shows, too, in the many public buildings which patriotic Greeks have given to their town during the last generation: the University with its shining figures of Apollo and Athena; the Library with its outside staircase sweeping down in a unique and delightful curve; the Zappeion, a large exhibition building set in its own new public garden; and the long perspective of the marble Stadium showing white among the young plantations on Ardettus.

The creamy buildings, the gardens, the vistas of sea and hills—these are the features that give modern Athens her charm. And to these must be added the intoxicating air, the continual scent of orange-blossom and mimosa wafted from hidden groves, the gaiety of troops and bugles, not to speak of the blue and silver liveries on the royal carriages and the stir around the brilliant little court. There are young princes married to famous beauties from the courts of Europe, and there is always the

excitement of looking out for the carriages of royal ladies. Without its court half the charm of modern Athens would be lost from the point of view of the mere observer. Who would not be sad to miss the blare of trumpets when the Queen in her motor leaves the Palace for her afternoon drive, the playing of the band for the trooping of the colours, the changing of the guard, and all the pretty pomp of which Athenians get full benefit since the Palace is in the heart of the town?

There are really two centres to the town. Constitution Square is the haunt of the foreigner. Here are the royal Palace, the smart hotels, the tourist agencies, the sellers of almond-blossom and violets, the islanders showing their webs of lace or baskets of sponges or eastern rugs held out over one arm. Concord Square at the lower end of the town is the centre for the natives. From it radiate all the main streets. Here are hotels, clean and roomy, with good Greek restaurants below; here are the banks and business houses; and instead of the victorias and landaus and big Austrian horses of the upper square there are here merry little open chaises covered with awnings and drawn by two small horses.

My first vivid impression of Athens is connected with these white horses in the *vis-à-vis* cabs. After the bewildering loveliness of the journey along the Gulf of Corinth and the Saronic Gulf, we arrived in Athens one evening to find rain-wet streets shining with sunset, and the horses such strange shades of blue and pink, they seemed to have stepped from the Bayeux tapestry. Later experience showed that it is only the lining of the harness that dyes the horses to this hectic brilliance after a shower of rain.

From the region around Concord Square a number of straight new streets run up the slopes at the base of Lycabettus. Here again my first impressions were at

fault. The beak-like rock of Lycabettus seemed to dominate the whole town. The Acropolis and even Hymettus seemed far away and insignificant by comparison. It was quite a shock to learn that instead of needing guides and a rope Lycabettus is a mere garden-hill and can be climbed before breakfast.

When Athens is not the muddiest town in Europe it can be the dustiest. The streets are metalled with friable limestone which seems unable to bind. Dry weather disintegrates it and wet weather washes it away. A day of torrential winter rain turns the streets into stony river-beds down which there gallop streams of yellow mud. The sun comes out again and in time the streets are dried, but it is months before a carriage can pass along them. It took nothing less than the prospect of a royal visit to induce the steam-roller to visit one hill-side, and then it only appeared at the eleventh hour. In fact the steam-roller may be said to have rolled up a few yards in front of the royal carriage. Remonstrances at this treatment were met with the reply, "But if we had mended the roads a week ago, the rain might have destroyed them again before the King came"—a remark that illustrates the difficulty of road-making in our town.

However, in this, as in so many other ways, Athens is making rapid strides, and now all the principal streets are laid with asphalt.

Athens is the capital of Greece, but it is also the market town for Attica. This fact is pleasantly emphasized by the groups of peasants who each morning converge upon the city from the surrounding country. Conspicuous in their heavy garments covered with handsome wool embroidery, Albanians may be seen along any of the main roads leading to Athens. Some are in gaily painted carts, slightly resembling those used by peasants in Sicily. They are bringing the

produce of their small farms to town and at the same time will give a lift to their women friends who have business in Æolus Street, the great shopping quarter for the peasants. Those with lighter wares come, not in carts, but with donkeys carrying fruit, honey in large tins, brushwood for the bakers' ovens, or evergreens for churches and booths—picturesque loads all of them. The shepherds come on foot, with or without their flocks. Their business is usually to pay their tithes or rent. The monastery of the Holy Angels owns much grazing-ground near Vari, and one or two shepherds are generally seen outside its doors on the outskirts of the town. They are distinguished not only by the shepherd's crook (which they invariably carry) but also by the rough outer coat covered with hanging fringes. At first sight it looks as if it were the sheep's own coat that is being worn. On looking closely, however, you see that it is no true sheepskin but a woven garment with the ends of the wool left loose. Another favourite coat common to shepherds and peasants alike is made of heavy brown cloth with long black hairs. It is as solid but more harsh than our felt, and it is worn more as a protection against rain or sun than for warmth. Indeed it is too stiff and open to keep out the cold, but in summer, when the sleeves are thrown back from the shoulders, it shelters the spine from the sun.

These peasants whom one sees daily in the streets of Athens are by no means the "country cousins" of European cities. They have more the air of local gentry, paying an occasional visit to their county town. They know their way about and have their own haunts where they are welcomed. There are many little wine-shops at the corners of the streets, where the group of patient donkeys are often seen clustering in a scrap of shadow, while their masters are chatting or singing within. After the long ride into Athens the peasant dismounts here and

goes inside to skim the first cream of town gossip while he washes the dust from his throat. The animals are not tied, and sometimes a donkey, tired of waiting, indulges in the pleasure of a roll with or without the pack on his back. Then out rushes the brown-coated, white-legged master, and with much adjuration of the Panagia, "Holy Virgin," the beast is dragged from the dust and its load readjusted. There is also the *pantopoleion*, a great friend to the peasant. Here groceries are sold, together with much useful household hardware, while small refreshments, wine, coffee, or *loukoumi* may be found at any hour. Each village patronizes its own particular *pantopoleion*, generally on the outskirts of the town. Having left their donkeys in the care of the *bakalis*, or innkeeper, the young Albanians swagger about the town with a swinging stride. I had often wondered what became of the women-folk, who do not as a rule wander about the town with their men-kind. The question was answered the other day when I tracked a party of some thirty to a favourite little church in one of the small streets leading to the Metropolis Square. It was winter, but the sun fell on the side of the street opposite the church, and here they squatted on the curb talking and laughing until eleven o'clock. At eleven the soup kitchen in the neighbourhood opened and they flocked to it in a body. They completely filled one of the long tables and made merry over beans and soup. This finished, they returned to their sunny station outside Hagia Barbara and probably spent the rest of the day there. They attended service in the church and perhaps wandered off by twos and threes to make their purchases in the streets near by, leaving babies in charge of the neighbours who remained on the curb. Thus when evening falls and the jingling little red carts come to pick them up and take them home again they are not jaded as our English country-folk would be with a day of sight-seeing and shopping. Sights they

have seen, but only such as happened to pass their way, not sought or paid for ; and the shopping has been done with the expedition of those who have decided for months past on the exact nature and price of each purchase.

There is a great deal of fun as the youngest and oldest members of the party are pulled up into their place, and then each cart sets off straight for home, the bells on the horses' necks ringing as they go. In front sits the driver with his wife holding the baby. Between them are squeezed men friends. Behind these are three girls with white handkerchiefs on their heads and two older men with caps. These are all perched round the edges of the cart, for the centre is occupied by the large new washing-tub, which is the crowning glory of the day's excursion. The cart jolts on the stones and the girls laugh nervously as they cling with both hands to the sides. Then the twilight swallows them, and the town-dweller who has watched them turns home with the feeling that a country breeze has swept through the streets.

There is another way in which the country element is kept alive in Athens. I have often been amazed at the number of bootblacks thronging all the public squares. It is true that the modern Athenians seem to rejoice in having their boots polished at all odd minutes, but even so I wondered what could be the special attraction that drew so large a proportion of youngsters to this not very remunerative trade. After a time I learned that this is the outward sign of a great educational movement. From all parts of Greece boys with any special aptitude for learning are drafted to Athens from the provinces and are given a free education in large night-schools started for the purpose. In the day-time they earn their living and learn the practical wisdom of their trade, which is generally that of bootblack and errand-boy. In the evening they go to school, and an

ambitious boy pushes himself forward with no barrier between himself and the goal of his ambition, the Church, the Bar, or Parliament. Even in their school-life they are a privileged class. It is always supposed that it is their political weight which prevents any attempt on the part of the municipality to provide crossings on the proverbially muddy streets. Any private enterprise in this direction would at once be rudely crushed by the united bootblacks. In American terms this may be described as a "great democratic educational shoe-shine company." The boys are all known as *loustri*, literally "shiners," though not every *loustro* follows the trade of a bootblack.

The *loustro* is an institution all over the city. He is the universal errand-boy, the trustworthy messenger, and the general domestic assistant in cases of emergency. He is ready to dig your garden, to transport your furniture, to wash your carriage, and to run for a doctor. More than once I have seen a well-dressed women call a *loustro* to carry her baby, and in each case the burden seemed satisfied with its nurse. The *loustro* is distinguished by a long blouse of tucked country cotton and by a rather impish smile.

The pedlars are another numerous body in Athens. Turkish tradition assumes that women do not leave their houses to make purchases and that the wares must be brought to their doors. The Turk has disappeared, but the tradition of seclusion lingers and the pedlar remains. Tired little donkeys climb up and down the steep outlying streets of Athens, carrying upright cupboards with glass fronts like miniature shops, and in these cupboards is shown a depressing assortment of tapes, buttons, and artificial jewellery. Pedlars without donkeys are also known. One of these may be seen carrying a dozen dress lengths from door to door. Eleven are laid over the right shoulder, the twelfth is draped in sweeping folds over the extended left arm and his voice calls as he

goes, "*Forémata, oraia forémata, peninda lepta o pichys*" ("Dresses, beautiful dresses, fifty lepta the pik"). Counterpanes and rugs are hawked about the town in the same fashion, and the small householder finds the temptation irresistible. Amateur pedlars also abound. The man in search of a job goes to a shop in Æolus Street and is given two of the most unsaleable articles it can produce, probably a black japanned table and a flower-stand. These he carries round the suburbs crying his wares as he goes. It always seemed to me unlikely that any housewife would suddenly awake to the fact that a flower-stand was the very thing she needed, nor did it seem possible that the objects would attract her by their intrinsic merit, yet I suppose that some one did once buy a black japanned table from a man at the door, or how else account for the pedlar's persistence?

Most conspicuous of all are the men selling bread or sweetmeats. In every holiday resort you see the *koulouri*-seller with his rings of sesame-covered bread dear to the children's hearts. At the street corners you see the same type of white-coated street-hawker selling different kinds of Turkish sweetmeat. These and the bread are carried in a basket slung in front of the seller. Besides these there are numbers of little stalls planted along the wayside under the shade of the pepper-trees or planes. Athenians, big and little, often buy their breakfast at these stalls and munch it as they go to work or to school. Breakfast is of course a misleading term in these lands; the *koulouri* or the slice of bread rebaked into a solid biscuit (*paximadhi*) eaten on the way to work is not dignified by the name of a meal. The southern races of Europe are content with two meals a day, while the Northerner takes three or four, but I doubt if the Southerner is really more abstemious. These bread vendors are always doing business, for from early childhood the Athenian is taught to nibble food at all hours. The Englishman's cult of a

good appetite is unknown. No doubt each method is suited to its own climate.

The most picturesque of all these town pedlars is the fruit-seller. It is not possible to be a day in Athens without noticing him and his donkey. The golden oranges and apples are piled high on the donkey's panniers. It looks a cruel load for the little animal, but he carries it cheerfully ; there is a good deal of false bottom to the pannier. The load would suffer no less than the bearer if these deep baskets were really filled to the bottom with fruit.

In Constitution Square, hanging round the steps of the hotels, there are two other characteristic types, the sponge-sellers and the lace-men from Cyprus. These are not part of the normal life of Athens ; when the tourist season is over they vanish and we miss their insinuating smiles. The shallow waters of the Mediterranean have long lent themselves to the sponge industry, and two of its centres are at Ægina and Hydra. On either of these islands you may see the brown harvest spread out to dry upon the beach. Here are all varieties of size and colour, known to the trade under the mysterious names of "Fine Turkeys," "Brown Turkeys," "White Turkeys," "Elephant's Ear," "Cups," "Solids," and "Flats." The best fishing-ground is off the coast of Tunis.

It is worth while to take one of the Athenian sponge-sellers into a retired corner and get him to empty his basket for you apart from the crowd of rival sellers and curious passers-by. You will find specimens of every variety in his deep store, and you will notice with surprise that the best sponges, the brown ones, are at the bottom. On the surface are placed the poorer ones, artificially whitened to attract the traveller, who, as usual, is supposed to be ignorant of the real values of native articles. The smell of the sea is in that magic basket, and if you question your sunburnt merchant you may find that he

himself knows much of the fascinating and dangerous trade. He will tell you how on calm summer days the boats float over the surface of the sea ; the sponge-fishers look through its depths with a water telescope until they discover the sponges growing on the rock below. In the stern of the boat sits the diver holding a great flat stone to which a rope is tied. He is quite naked but for a net-bag round his neck, and no one speaks to him as he waits, taking deep breaths. When his lungs are thoroughly inflated he seizes the stone, holds it to his chest, and suddenly without a word plunges into the sea. At the end of a minute or more a tug comes at the cord, and his companions throw themselves on the rope, pulling it up with a fine and rhythmical movement, the one stooping for the cord as the other flings himself back. The air is full of flying coils. A gleam of white flashes far down, and in a moment the diver shoots out of the water. In the bag round his neck is a slimy brown ball worth half a sovereign in Bond Street. This is the most primitive form of sponge-fishing. Diving dresses are also largely used in the Mediterranean ; owing to the careless fatalism, characteristic of the Greek, these are often allowed to get out of order and the proportion of deaths is accordingly appalling. In shallower water the sponges can be secured by a knife tied at the end of a series of jointed poles.

The wares of the Cypriote lace-seller do not carry this atmosphere of romance with them, but he is a most attractive figure. He wears the island costume with its baggy knee-breeches, short cloth jacket, and an enormous sash wound around his waist. He fastens his cobwebs of lace round the steps of your hotel and confronts you with such a winning smile that before you realize what you are doing he has ensnared you in his toils.

The peasants, the *loustri*, the pedlars—these are the everyday figures of the busy town life, and these supply

the note of colour that we miss elsewhere. Only at certain times of the year the whole town becomes suddenly picturesque with the enthusiasm of a national holiday. At New Year especially the place is transformed. The fruit shops are changed into booths of evergreens, festooned with golden strings of apples and oranges. The butchers adorn their wares with a grim pleasantry which it is hard to enjoy. The slaughtered boar has a paper cap and the calf a gold star on its forehead. Streamers of green and blue tissue paper float from every stall, flags are flying, and coloured waxen tapers are everywhere for sale. On New Year's Eve (13th January in modern style) the streets of the town are thronged with merry-makers and soon become paved with paper confetti. Hermes Street and Æolus Street are lined with men selling cheap toys. These are nominally for the children, but their elders buy them freely, and the light-hearted of all ages parade the streets blowing the penny trumpet or inflating the paper cock. The hilarity goes on till midnight, and does not die away until the cannons under Hymettus welcome the sunrise of the New Year with a salute of twenty-one guns.

After the New Year festivities there is a brief lull before the town breaks out again into the frivolities of Carnival. It may be that the two merry-makings come too near together. There often seems to be something spurious and forced in the Carnival masquerades as compared with the joys of New Year time. People complain that the procession through the town which takes place on the last Sunday before Lent is no longer what it used to be, and in some years it has by common consent been abandoned. Still there are always a number of private parties at which there are fancy dresses and masks, while the bourgeoisie amuse themselves by parading the muddy streets as harlequins and pierrots.

It is the children year by year who spur on the flagging enthusiasm by their own gravity and jousness.

The fashion of "dressing-up" the children at the Carnival time seems universal among all classes. Beautiful satin-clad cavaliers and ladies trot demurely beside their nurses on the way to their afternoon party. I doubt if there is any family so poor that it does not manage to find some old counterpane or curtain or pillow-case that can be turned to account as a fancy dress for Janni or Marigo. For at least ten days before Lent these comic little figures are seen bustling along in groups of two or three with much smothered laughter behind the paper masks.

Another joy of Carnival that is common to the whole child-life of Athens is the Carnival camel. Now this is a puzzling and mysterious institution at whose origin it is impossible to guess. In the first place there is a real camel which sometimes appears in the streets at the Carnival. It is seldom seen, and if you happen to come across it your luck for the year is secured. In the second place there is the pseudo-camel, a terrifically ugly beast, created on the principle of the circus donkey. It waggles its head by a string worked from the interior and drops its lower jaw. Its back is covered by a cloth on which is painted a desert scene with palm-tree and pyramid all complete. Thus the problem of costume and scenery are solved simultaneously. In front of this creature walks a small drum and fife band, and behind it flocks the inevitable group of excited children. The last time I saw the camel it had halted beside a wine-shop. Its head drooped languidly on the ground. The desert scene was lifted and from under the side of the camel two hot, dusty men crept out to the unutterable joy of its admirers.

At Carnival time other amusements are found in the streets. Actors are drawn about in carts. The horses are taken out; the cart becomes the stage, and plays of a Punch and Judy brutality are enacted.

Really good acting is seen in the summer-time, when

the roofless theatres are opened. There is a school of vigorous native art. The scenery of these open-air plays has often an Elizabethan simplicity, the audience is good-tempered and cheerful, the acting has the freshness and vigour of private theatricals. The plays are full of topical quips, and the most successful are frank reproductions of modern Athenian life. The open-air theatre is primarily for "the people." There is, however, a high-class edition to be found at Phalerum. On hot summer evenings the residents who still remain in Athens flock down here, take their dinner by the sea, and afterwards go to the theatre. It is not perhaps very high art, but it is fresh and amusing. The modern Athenian seems to retain a true dramatic instinct, and the acting is of a much higher order than would be found at similar places in England.

After the Carnival the town settles down to a period of quiet and to a genuine fast of forty days. In saying that the fast is genuine, I do not of course mean that it is universal. Among the wealthy and educated its rigorous observance becomes yearly rarer. Even among the lower classes there are many who have broken away from the tradition of their fathers. On the whole, however, the abstinence first from meat and later from fish, eggs, and even oil, is honestly observed among the lower orders. It is a matter of real self-denial. On Good Friday the churches are open all the day long. A bier is shown wreathed with flowers and underneath this the children are taught to creep. In the evening the bier is carried through the town and men and women walk behind, each with a lighted taper. The tapers appear again the next night at the great ceremony of Easter Eve, which takes place in the square outside the Metropolitan Church. Each man carries an unlighted wax candle to the square, and when the sacred fire is brought out from the church the light is passed from candle to


candle. Good luck will come to those who can carry the flame to their homes without having it blown out by a gust of night air.

Easter Day, like New Year's Day, is ushered in with a salute of twenty-one guns. It is the greatest festival in the Church's year. Throughout the day the noise is continuous. Regiments with their bands march through the streets to join the procession, when the Royal Family and all public officials go in state to the Te Deum service in the Cathedral. After the service the King visits the various barracks to taste the Easter lamb. His appearance in each quarter is greeted with a fresh burst of melody. As the day wears on instrumental gives way to vocal music and until midnight choruses of four or five men wander about the streets singing the monotonous minor harmonies of the Eastern Church. To call them minor harmonies is to understate the case, for there is an interval representing something like half a semitone which is peculiar to Eastern music and has an effect more minor than anything known to western harmony. Beside the singing and the brass bands the day used to be punctuated by small explosions. The Athenian invented a harmless cracker which made a tremendous noise and did more than anything else to refresh his soul in thanksgiving. Now this has been forbidden by law. When we asked why this was the chosen form of celebrating Easter Day we were told that men were "shooting Judas." Judas Iscariot is as it were the "Guy Fawkes" of Greek lands, and effigies of him are sometimes carried about in real Guy Fawkes fashion. Perhaps these noisy rejoicings jar on an Englishman's conception of Easter Day, but when the prejudice has been overcome he realizes the genuine feeling of joy that underlies it all. Still men greet each other with the old Easter greeting, "Christos Anesti" ("Christ is risen"), and still there comes the devout reply, "Vevaios Anesti"

("He is risen indeed"). Two other festivals are Lady Day, 25th March (old style), which is celebrated as the anniversary of the declaration of independence, and St. George's Day (23rd April), which until last year's tragedy was kept in honour of the late King George.

Each town has its great days and its special types. They are not the important elements in its life, yet it is these that colour the mental impression and add a pleasant sharpness to our memory. Behind these moves the great machine, with its growing industries, its philanthropic societies, its social activities, the world of politics, and the life of the court. The bird of passage takes these things for granted and keeps his vision of the town a purely subjective impression.

Alas! poor bird of passage, how much he gains and how much he loses! He gains a remoteness of spirit which the dwellers in Athens cannot always attain. The stranger can, if he wishes, ignore the social life around and feed on the memories of his classics until the shadows of his fancy become more real than the noisy phantoms of the modern town. His memory is not blurred by repeated impressions. His one first vision stays. Passers-by who have only a day or two in Athens are wont to be apologetic for their haste. They do not understand that they retain treasures of emotional sight-seeing which the city-dwellers can but envy. Yet on the other hand, the traveller with three days in Athens, who comes begging for crumbs of beauty from Athena's table, must be content with all she gives him, even though it be no more than two grey mornings on the Acropolis with a March wind blowing dust into his eyes and a crowd of guttural Teutons exploring the holy places. Let him be reticent in his disillusion, for is there not, after all, some discourtesy in approaching beautiful places at unsuitable times? The real spirit of worship should wait for the goddess to reveal herself at the moment when her beauty



is more apparent, her abasement most hidden. This is the instinct that lies behind the custom of visiting the Parthenon by moonlight. It is worth any effort to know the Acropolis at its happy hours, at sunrise and sunset, by moonlight and starlight. To see sunrise from the Acropolis is to watch the chill purity of dawn shivered into fragments by the hundred golden lances which the sun sends before him over the grey shield of Hymettus. The columns of the Parthenon stand pallid, unmoved, and silent. Then in an instant the change comes. In the fraction of a second the marble is transformed from death to life. The golden glow flashes like a quick smile. The magical instant is over and the daylight world reasserts itself. Are not the swift revelations worth hours of noonday communings?

Moonlight has no special Athenian attributes. The wonder is concentrated on the silver glory and the great temples lose some of their individuality; these inky shadows and sharp silhouettes might belong to many another ruin in the moonlight. The silent, starlight hour before the moonrise reveals more of the spirit of the Parthenon. The stars move so peacefully below the black edge of the Acropolis. The whole world seems circling round the solid columns anchored up here in space. And in these dusky hours we get a chance of another sensation when Athena's own owl flaps slowly out from under the temple's shadow.

But the time of all others for the revelation of what beauty means is the time of sunset in summer. At the end of an exhausting day the Acropolis is almost deserted. The tourists have left the city and the Athenians who remain prefer more social haunts. Yet the air that greets one at the end of the climb is a special benediction of coolness. The town lies below parched and panting. Up here the breeze from the sea is blowing freshly, and if it is a lucky evening, as the sun nears the

heights of Cithæron, the air begins to tingle and vibrate with colour. These lucky evenings do not come perhaps more than once in seven. Yet they are worth waiting for. In the town one already begins to feel the stir of the sunmotes in the air. "It is a colour evening," they say, and if you are wise you will hasten to the high place to worship. Here you find the temples bathing in a sea of gold. The carving on the north porch of the Erechtheum is sharply articulate in the sunlight poured over it. The various faces of the columns catch the light at just so many different angles. Here it becomes translucent, here full gold, and here in the shadow all tender and unbelievable shades of violet. Beautiful, beautiful marble, hewn and chiselled and defaced, now for one magic hour glorified and restored again to its rightful heritage—man's joy!

The sun has nearly gone now. We walk to the east end of the Acropolis and lean out over the noisy scene of life below. There come up to us the confused cries of a great city and we see modern Athens spreading beneath us, with its white houses and the patches of heavy green marking the gardens. Then our eyes seek the hills and follow the curves of the horizon, until they seem like the lift and fall of some familiar melody. And we know that the melody in our hearts is the same that has rung through the lives of all the lovers of the Fair City, who came up here to gaze on her violet crown and aspire after her visions of ordered beauty and to sigh for love of all she might have been. "Beautiful city of Cecrops! May we not also say, Beautiful City of God?"

CHAPTER XII

HOME LIFE IN ATTICA

IT is not easy to know the Greek, the true Greek, in his own home. In Athens, as in every other capital, certain families of wealth or influence form a society so cosmopolitan that they are no longer typical of the national life. Inside their homes you see furniture from London, hangings from Paris, dresses from Vienna. Set down inside one of these little marble palaces you would find it difficult to guess to what nationality your hosts belonged. Two or three languages would be spoken around you, and even the children growing up under the care of English or Swiss nurses would chatter in English or French. At a dinner or dance you would be sure you were not in England, but you might be in any southern capital. I have grateful memories of many pretty evening parties at such houses, where the ladies wore exquisite gowns and never seemed to ruffle their hair; where partners were suave and serious, and etiquette forbade them to stay with their ladies for more than a fraction of a dance; of dinners where there was no desolating parting at the end of dessert, no jerky reunion in the drawing-room afterwards.

In Athens there is no titled Greek aristocracy, for the old titles were not revived at the establishment of the new kingdom and the Crown was given no power to create new ones. A distinct upper circle there is nevertheless; a society of wealth, birth, and power. Families

holding names known in history, descendants of soldiers or statesmen who came to the front during the War of Independence, and a few Venetian counts from the Ionian Islands, certain Phanariot families who received titles from their Turkish masters in the past—these are the birthright members who form the Greek contingent of that cosmopolitan company which stands for aristocracy in Athens. Then there are also Anglo-phil houses where everything is quite English—more English than England sometimes—from the lawn-tennis court in the garden to the jolly sit-down tea of bread and honey round the dining-room table.

These home circles are all accessible. It is the home of the genuine middle-class Greek that is hard to penetrate. He lives in one of the many gay little streets on the slopes of Lycabettus, or around Concord Square, or on the Patissia Road. You may call at such houses year in and year out and never meet with other than the invariable "Dhen dheketai" ("Madame does not receive"). One guesses that life in these homes is not planned with a view to the reception of casual visitors. The drawing-room is probably shrouded in holland, the blinds down, and the carpet rolled into a long sausage at one end of the room. Madame is sitting in the living-room in a nice cool wrapper trimming her hat, with pins in her mouth. Monsieur perhaps is having his midday siesta on the sofa. A caller here would be an inconvenient interruption. Unless you are on terms of intimate, neighbourly understanding involving a perfect frankness about curling-pins and dressing-gowns, you will not penetrate the sanctity of these homes. Twice or thrice in the year at most the house is open to visitors. On New Year's Day and on the days dedicated to their own patron saints Monsieur and Madame will open the shutters in the large drawing-room. The hollands will be taken off the

chairs, and sweet cakes with rich creamy coverings will be placed on the central table. Throughout the whole day friends and acquaintances will be welcomed. There will be much offering of flowers, congratulations, pretty speeches, jokes, and general jollification. These grown-up birthday parties are the merriest occasions. No one is ever "too old for birthdays" in Athens. A sober middle-aged gentleman will go on year after year celebrating not exactly the day of his birth, but the festival of the saint whose name he bears. His friends will perhaps publish their greetings in the newspaper and he may himself remind the public of the coming anniversary. On one or two occasions, ignorant of our host's Christian name or forgetful of the calendar of the Greek Church, we have sometimes surprised these birthday parties and have been pressed to join the group round the table. Middle-aged men are slapping each other on the back, laughing with tears in their eyes, and then turning to the stranger with quick courtesy to interpret the old allusion or the idiomatic joke. There is nothing more charming than the way in which these mere acquaintances are ready to make us sharers of that humorous or humiliating adventure that befell them long years ago and is now the stock joke on these family anniversaries. After realizing the importance of the name-day one understands why it is a point of honour to remember a Greek's Christian name and to address him in full on an envelope rather than make use of the convenient non-committal initial.

Though the home of the Athenian citizen is not open to view in its normal workaday aspect, one may see a good deal of home life in the family groups that cluster round the cafés, that come out in the evening to listen to the band, or that rattle down to Phalerum in the noisy steam-tram. Delightful parties are seen sitting round the little iron tables of the open-air cafés

in town and suburb. The mother has an unexpressive olive face ; she sits placidly eating her ice and seems to be enjoying her tight-fitting green dress and well-feathered hat. The father also is enjoying the dark-eyed baby on his knee ; and the sleek-headed children are enjoying the sweets, the band, and the sense of the little *festa*. Bank holidays in England rarely show this type of quiet family festivity. Our well-ordered families of this class would not allow themselves to feast in public. One must look higher or lower in the social scale for that.

In spite of the customary *mariage de convenance* the life of the average Greek household seems peaceful and contented. There may not be much intellectual companionship between husband and wife, but custom has assigned to each their sphere of influence with a precision that reduces discussion to a minimum. In houses that are blessed with children there is every appearance of affection and self-congratulation.

Children are universally petted in Greece. They are treated as companions even in babyhood. They have their part in the full family life and usually dine at their parents' table. They hear much grown-up conversation and soon learn to take a sophisticated view of life. They are not necessarily spoilt, yet they are not left alone in their happy kingdom of childhood. In larger households where a nursery is provided for them it becomes the most popular and often the most frequented room in the house. English nurses are sometimes driven to despair by fruitless efforts to secure the discipline and quiet routine of an English nursery. The spoilt child—if there is one—has opportunities for the most relentless tyranny. One little girl of my acquaintance was bribed to eat her food, and of her delicate appetite made a profitable source of income until at last she spoilt the market by running up the

bidding as high as 24 drachmas (nearly £1) before she would eat her egg. She got the drachmas, but her father would not enter the unequal contest again.

In humble households a small income is often made to achieve wonderful results. There is a tradition of thrift and a careful planning of detail that is not unlike the French *ménage*. An officer drawing pay at about 500 drachmas a month (say £20) may be found living in a pleasant house with green shutters, a fine flight of steps leading up to the front door, and over it a balcony large enough to accommodate the whole family when they rush out to see papa marching by in his uniform of bronze and rose. There is an electric bell beside the front entrance. When you press this the door flies open, and if you hesitate on the threshold a voice from the upper air encourages you to walk in. You climb the steep clean staircase with a balustrade of new oak on your right and a wall frescoed with "art nouveau" curves on your left. The parlour that you enter is also furnished in the new style. There is no appearance of poverty. The whole place is clean and bright. The good Athenian housewife knows that the sun is her best friend. When the balcony is not needed as an opera box it does service as the sunning-ground for carpets, curtains, and bedding.

Further acquaintance with a family of this class would probably disclose a hard struggle with poverty—implying incessant watchfulness and anxiety. But a southern climate is kind to thin purses. The appetite of the Athenian is not large. The bill for fuel and washing is reduced to a minimum, thanks to the constant sunshine and clean atmosphere. There are pleasures to be had for nothing; the walk in the orange-grove, the masqueraders in the square, the change of the King's guard, the flash of blue and silver livery as a royal carriage goes by, and beyond all else the wide views

and the exhilarating atmosphere that sends us Athenians about our day's work with a singing heart. Compared with its equivalent in an English town, the home of struggling gentility in Athens is a paradise.

It is easier to share the life of the peasant than the life of the townsman. The well-to-do peasant-proprietor is hospitality itself when you visit him in the country. Even in towns the peasant class seems more approachable than the black-coated gentry living beside them. Among the peasants the Turkish tradition still survives to a great extent. The women are secluded and are also in a sense subjugated, though this does not imply disrespect, much less ill-treatment. One characteristic family comes into my mind and I see the mother of our host, cooking and serving the dinner and then coming to stand behind his chair and dominate the conversation. No one who has heard this good lady contradicting her son, lecturing her guests, and laying down the law on questions of religion and philosophy will ever dogmatize about the subjection of women in the East. Yet this same woman would not dream of sitting at table with her son, and was quite content to spend her days in the kitchen while he entertained us in the living-room. This common custom is no doubt a relic of Turkish manners. The old traditions are slowly changing, and one dare not generalize. To give the two sides of the picture it is only fair to describe another scene photographed on my memory.

It was the Monday before Lent, known as "Clean Monday," a day of purification and a universal holiday. A jolly old Attic countryman was walking down University Street with his wife. She was a mild-eyed matron with one of those beautiful passive faces that come sometimes to women who dwell in country places and are ruled by strong husbands. He was a fine broad fellow, well over fifty, and so upright that he almost

seemed to be leaning backwards. The open sleeves of his blue serge coat floated back from his wide shoulders, his clean kilt swung to and fro as he stepped, and the big leather purse worn round his waist suggested the opulence of convex lines curving over his convex figure. The wife walked a pace or two behind him, looking wistfully at the closed shops and showing disappointment that her big husband had brought her into the town on a *festa* . Her whole attitude indicated that she had spent her life dominated by this powerful personality. I doubt if she had even thought it worth while to expostulate that morning when he expressed his intention of coming into the town on a day when all the townsfolk were making holiday in the country.

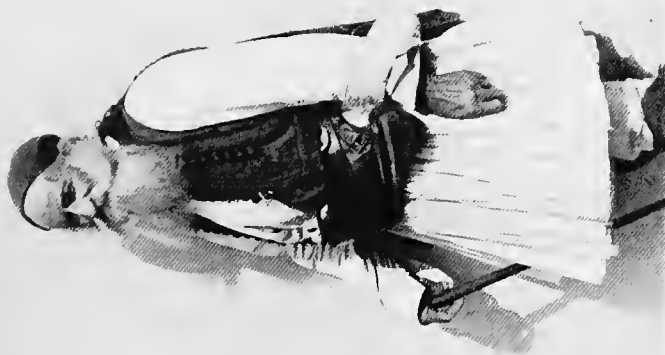
One important matter that tends to keep a woman in a subordinate position is the necessity of providing her with a dowry. To put the matter bluntly, a Turk buys his wife, but a Christian woman must buy her husband. However useful a girl may be at home, no filial duties redeem her from the necessity of marriage. Until she is married her parents cannot die and her brother cannot live, for it is reckoned disgraceful for a man to marry before his sisters. This tradition dates no doubt from the Turkish denomination when an unprotected maiden might soon find herself in a Turk's harem. The difficulty of finding a husband resolves itself into the difficulty of finding a dowry. Once the money is provided there are matchmakers whose business it is to provide the girl with a suitable *parti* . The poorest parents must therefore provide for their daughters a sum of money—the amount varying in the different districts—a set of house linen, a small trousseau for herself, one or more suits of clothes for the bridegroom, and an *umbrella* . I shall never forget the emphasis laid on the last three words by one anxious parent. She seemed to feel that everything else might

be possible, but the umbrella presented insuperable difficulties. Spinning and weaving, sewing and embroidery could all be managed at home. An umbrella must be paid for in hard cash.

In order to gather this outfit a girl begins making her house linen as soon as she can spin. The cotton is woven in the house and then sheets and towels are marked large with her initials in neat red cross-stitch. Next she makes her own wardrobe, and a girl of well-to-do parents will allow herself to give time and trouble to the embroidery on her short coats and round the hem of her skirts. Perhaps like the English country-woman she will specialize on some form of crochet lace. It is quite allowable to ask a Greek girl to show you her dowry. She will keep the man's suit of clothes until the last, and then, after slight pressure, will show you knitted stockings, embroidered waistcoats, and short overcoats, with perhaps a sash and cap to complete the costume. When asked how she had guessed the size of her unknown future lord she will blush and look rather startled, while her mother says firmly that it is necessary that he should fit the clothes. This must be an additional complication in the work of the matchmaker.

It has often been our privilege to spend a night or two in the house of some well-to-do Greek peasant. As soon as it is daylight the household bestirs itself. The man goes off to his work in the fields; wife and daughters fetch water, mend the charcoal fires, and prepare coffee for the stranger. There is no gathering round the table for breakfast, no routine of house work. The peasant will presently break off hoeing or building to drink a cup of black coffee at the village café and the women-folk probably eat bread as they go to their work. I have never yet seen a Greek peasant woman sit down to what we should call "a comfortable meal" in her own house

Yet she is by no means a mere drudge. It is true that she has much to do for her household. There is water and wood to fetch, clothes to wash at the spring, food to prepare, yarn to spin, stockings to knit, floors to sweep, and children to nurse. She adds many duties to those of the ordinary English housewife, and the only ones she seems to omit are the dusting of furniture and the darning of stockings. Her house is thoroughly washed out at intervals with plenty of water and a good large brush ; the bare walls and plain wooden furniture go without a daily dusting. She has no time to darn stockings. Where necessary she can sew on a large patch. Greek women are great patchers and have learnt how decorative the "patch complementary" may be when boldly applied. Yet in spite of her many duties she has plenty of time for social intercourse. Her washing is carried on at a public laundry—the village fountain. Her patching and spinning are done as she sits on her low doorstep. Here also she combs her children's hair and nurses her baby. She is constantly cracking jokes with her women neighbours ; she knows all the gossip of the village, and makes a point of attending church on Sundays and saints' days with a fresh white or lemon-coloured kerchief round her head. On these days she will join for hours in the slow rhythmical dances of the village. Her hands are knotted, her brown face wrinkled with the sun-frown of southern lands. Round her mouth are creases of humour. She has the genuine "salty" wit of one who has made friends with her own hard life. It is the type of the sonsy Scotch woman planted under a more genial sky. Sometimes she shares her husband's labour in the fields. At harvest-time it is not uncommon to find a village entirely deserted. The women are working with their husbands, the children are playing beside them, and the baby is slung on a tree to sleep in the shade. As a general rule the man does



A VILLAGE HOST
WEARING PUSTANELLA



WOMAN OF ELEUSIS
SPINNING AND CARRYING FIREWOOD

not come home for his midday meal. More often you will see him shortly before noon eating his bread and olives beside his plough or mule. Like an English aristocrat the Greek peasant "dines" at night. Now his wife must prepare for him the best they can afford. It may be "egg-lemon" soup or a dish of raisins and sesame, or a fish fried in oil. There will be meat on a feast day: perhaps a ragged bit of lamb or neat little *kabobs* of mutton roasted on a twig of bay. The local wine, good or bad, will be his drink, and the feast is furnished with oranges or cherries; artichokes or lettuce may come from his own plot, and perhaps there is an abundant dish of wild salad—mustard or dandelions which he has carried home in his pocket-handkerchief. He is a great bread-eater and heartily enjoys his plain loaf eaten with olives or radishes as a relish.

When fresh the country bread is certainly excellent. Baking, however, is a cumbrous process, and there are long intervals of stale bread between the great baking days. On these days the village oven is made red-hot by a furnace of brushwood. After the fire has gone out and when the oven has slightly cooled the village housewives bring their loaves on trays and pile them into the white dome-shaped building. The business becomes especially solemn at Easter-time, when each loaf is marked with a cross and ornamented with embedded crimson eggs which are baked with the loaf. None but those who have undergone the severe Lenten fast of the Greek Church can tell how good that fresh bread tastes on Easter Day—the crackling brown crust sprinkled with sesame seeds and the mouthfuls of hard-boiled egg lurking in its interior.

The Greek priest is usually a peasant among peasants. He cultivates his bit of ground with his own hands and is glad to eke out its meagre produce by the fees that come to him for performing the few rites of the church:

funerals, weddings, baptisms, and purifications. Being a family man himself he knows how to handle a baby adroitly, and the ceremony of triple immersion is so swiftly accomplished that the infant has not even time to scream before it is handed back dripping to its mother. He knows how to make himself at home in any house and never neglects to visit every room with the sprig of basil and holy water at the purification before Lent. There are some notable exceptions, but as a rule he has no pretensions to any education beyond what is necessary to repeat the services of the church. He is a good-hearted companion rather than shepherd or leader of his flock.

The village community is still a reality in Greece. Sometimes it exists as a self-sufficing whole. The members are small peasant-proprietors who live on the produce of their farm or sheepfold. The simple arts of life are carried on in the households: wool, silk, and cotton are spun and woven at home. A large loom is part of the common furniture of each house, and the ceiling is often lined with hanging bamboo shelves on which thousands of silkworms are housed and fed. Each household lives on what it can produce, and the village carpenter, blacksmith, and dyer are paid in kind rather than in money. One result of this is that there is very little money passing from hand to hand. We have sometimes found the Greek peasant ludicrously ignorant of the market price of his day's labour. He is generally ready to hire himself out when opportunity offers, as this gives him a chance of earning money to pay for the two imported articles which are the luxuries of his simple life—coffee and tobacco.

When the American Greek returns home to squander his money before the eyes of his fellow-townsmen he advertises his affluence by sitting for long hours outside the village café drinking innumerable little cups of coffee and smoking long, thin cigarettes.

HOME LIFE OF THE EUROPEAN IN GREECE

In England housekeeping is a science or an art as you choose to regard it. In Greece it is a game and, like all other games, you must know the rules before you can enjoy it.

The first rule is "Never take anything seriously." If your cook bids you an eternal farewell two hours before your dinner party; if your new housemaid scrubs your parquet floors; if your tulip bulbs are cooked for onions, there is only one thing to be done, and that is *laugh*. At home we housewives are inclined to feel that our reputation is at stake if anything goes wrong. In Athens we all know that "such things will occur," and we all judge each other kindly and are willing to lend our cooks, or floor-polish, or our bulbs, as the case may be.

The second rule is "Live from hand to mouth." The conditions of the climate make it unwise to keep any store of provisions in the house. Be content that your cook should bring you each day your daily supply of bread, butter, milk, meat, and vegetables. If a party of English friends "come up with a song from the sea" and unexpectedly claim your hospitality for luncheon, your servants will gladly make all the show they can with everything there may happen to be in the house, though they and you must fast for it this night. Perhaps your butler will dash out to "borrow" a leg of mutton from your neighbour or the roses from his garden. No Greek servant ever fails to rise to an emergency. He loves emergencies. It is the daily round that gravels him.

The third rule is "Remember that a difference in standard is no crime." We of the higher morality are so apt to make a tragedy of it when we find that what we call "common honesty" is very uncommon; when untruthfulness is regarded as a *façon de parler* and cleanliness as a mere whim. It is hard to maintain our own

standard rigidly and yet to understand that the other folk have a different standard but are not without their own moral scruples. It is bad enough to be cheated or robbed, but does it not make matters better to realize that the cheat or the robber was perhaps doing no wrong in his own eyes?

Once learn these rules and the game goes merrily. Greek servants are delightful to deal with. They are so clever, so willing, so lighthearted, enthusiastic in their gratitude, abject in their despair, devoted to the honour of their master's house, shrewd, humorous, "quick in the uptake." Above all things they are very adaptable. You start your housekeeping with, say, a cook, a butler, a housemaid, a nurse, and a gardener, but these designations are mere sketchy indications of their various spheres. One day perhaps the butler will be nursing the baby, while the gardener is showing the cook how to make a cake. The next day it is the butler who is cooking and the housemaid has chosen to do a little weeding in the garden. The Greek is no specialist. The old Athenian tradition survives and any citizen holds himself capable of filling any office.

We once had an amusing experience of this on a Greek coasting steamer. We fouled our anchor on leaving a tiny port in the Peloponnese and our captain quite failed to get it clear again. The sun was setting and we seemed likely to stay at anchor all night. One by one the various members of the crew joined us on the bridge and helped the captain with advice and encouragement. It was finally the steward who took the matter in hand and so manœuvred the boat's head that he got the anchor clear. There was a great shout of joy from all the crew, and then, like Cincinnatus, he returned to the saloon to lay our dinner while the captain resumed the navigation of his ship.

It is hard to wring from any Greek servant an admis-

sion of ignorance. If I order "Cleopatra pudding," the cook will set to work to make what he imagines "Cleopatra pudding" ought to be rather than confess that he has never met with it. There are certain well-known types of Greek servants. I will sketch them in outline, first protesting that they are but composite pictures. I love my old friends too well to reveal their foibles in a portrait study.

The Butler is the mainstay and prop of the household. He rules the other servants like a housekeeper; he betrays their weaknesses to you; skilfully and delicately he imparts the impression that your peace and happiness depend on him. He alone can serve you faithfully; he alone knows where you keep your hats, your coats, your india-rubber, and your keys. He it is that guards you from intrusive callers when you are resting or induces the honoured guest to stay "another little quarter" in the hope of your return. He signals to you with his eyebrows that there is no more cake for the last visitors, and deftly he reads your answering eyebrow signal that "there is a tin of shortbread in the cupboard and the keys are in the upper left-hand drawer." He adorns your table with flowers and arranges a bower of roses to welcome you after an absence from home. He waits until the last minute for your letters and then flies down the road at top-speed, never grumbling at the long chase, never failing to assure you that he was "just in time for the mail." He knows a remedy for every ailment that besets you and will try to right every accident in the house. On locks and electric bells he will try his skill, though he leave them worse than he found them. He is no mean cook, and in many households it will fall to his share to prepare the breakfast. In an emergency he may be called upon to cook a dinner and he can always criticize the proper official over every dish. As a rule no joints are carved in the dining-room, so the butler

must hand the portion ready cut, and he shows his special professional knowledge by murmuring in your ear, "Not that piece—the next."

It is clear, then, that the butler is not a man to be parted from lightly. The longer you keep him the more indispensable he grows. You will have to take care lest he become a tyrant. "Il ne faut pas se laisser rouler par les Grecs," says experience, and how the butler would love to "roll" you, to order your dinners, invite your guests, bully your tradesmen, choose your newspapers, your friends, your servants. He would save you all trouble, and finally do something so outrageously arrogant that you would be bound to dismiss him.

The Cook is a free-lance. He lives in a home of his own and comes up in the morning with supplies for the day. After luncheon is served he will probably spend the afternoon at his club in the town, returning in the evening to cook your dinner. As he is constantly going from your home to the centre of the town he becomes something also of a messenger boy. He orders the cabs, takes daily letters to the post, and leaves notes. This latter service is the more necessary from the fact that it requires anything from a few hours to a week for a letter to find its way by post from one house in the city to another. When the cook does the marketing it is he who arranges the menu for the day. The housekeeper will have told him her plans, how many guests she expects and may even have indicated her views as to what food he shall procure. A docile cook will carry out her hints loyally, but a man of character may prefer to go his own way and will come up from town assuring his mistress that "there was not a hare to be found in the market, no boar, no deer, not a bit of game, but see what a noble turkey I have found for you!—beautiful, fat"; and he prods the turkey with his fingers, while she sets to work to reconstruct her ideas for dinner.

The book in which he writes down the items of his marketing is a charming document with wild spelling and no accents. The prices charged in the book are not exactly what he gave, but are about what any foreigner would be expected to pay in the market. The cook's commission is an acknowledged perquisite and must not be called dishonesty unless it assumes quite unreasonable proportions. In defence of the Greek servant it must also be added that thieving is very uncommon. We have always found him trustworthy where money and valuables were concerned.

In Greece as elsewhere the warm life of the cook leads to a warm temper. There is no "month's notice" in Greece. The *chef* walks out of the house when he has had enough of it. His employers are not inconsolable. They send a message to the Cooks' Club. The quorum of cooks there assembled discuss the matter, decide among themselves who is the most suitable man for your post, and next morning he turns up cool, fresh, and obliging, to obliterate the stormy memories of his predecessor. This Cooks' Club is an invaluable institution. Its members become an independent confraternity; they can share the poignant joys and sorrows of their profession and give that intelligent sympathy which every true artist requires from his fellows. From the club the cook will borrow any recipe or apparatus needed for a special occasion, and sometimes he will even bring up a friend to help him to prepare for a dinner party. No charge is made and we understand that it is all part of the give and take of club life.

A good *Housemaid* is something of a rarity. Domestic service is hardly yet understood among the lower orders. The survival of some old Turkish prejudice makes a man loth to let his sister or daughter leave her father's roof and shield until she is married. If dowries are to be earned the mother will probably prefer to go into service

herself and leave her daughters at home. This accounts for the fact that most housemaids are middle-aged or elderly women. The best are not easy to find, but if you secure one of the right type she may prove a treasure, combining the motherly wisdom of the old English nurse with the sprightly gaiety of the Southerner. She will laugh and cry over your personal joys and sorrows, will treat your absurd English ideas of method with the tolerance due to a child's fancies; she may have a genius for sewing and fine laundry-work, and if she hails from one of the Greek islands you may count on a sturdy love of soap and water, and a capacity for honest labour. Andros and Tenos have a reputation for supplying the most excellent maidservants. A young island girl may be a very vision of beauty, but the older ones are more commonly met with.

I have a clear picture of one dear old soul trotting about the house with wrinkled brown face and the curious hinged figure of the Greek peasant who bends from the hips rather than with the knees. She was the dearest, ugliest creature I ever knew and in spite of her sixty years as vain as a girl. Her delight in her English cap and apron was unfeigned. Her great grief was her lack of eyebrows. She confided this to me one day, saying: "I expected you would send us packing as soon as you arrived, mistress. Why, when we stood in the hall to receive you I never saw such an ugly crew—not an eyebrow among us." Her favourite epithet was the untranslatable *Kaimene*. "Poor soul" is perhaps the nearest English equivalent. She used it on every occasion, often accompanied by an encouraging pat on the shoulder. A request for a daily bath was met with the reply, "Ah yes, poor soul, it is better to be clean." This showed her understanding of the European point of view, for the Greek peasant as a rule does not bathe in order to be clean. A bath is an extreme remedy ordered

by the physician on rare occasions as an English doctor might order a cold pack. Once when we ventured to suggest a bath for some slight ailment we were met by the indignant answer, "What! wash off my chrism oil?" It was always a paradox to me how the good Greek housemaid could combine this horror of personal ablution with a real enjoyment of washing and cleaning the house. Her favourite way of cleaning is to take off her shoes and stockings, empty a canful of water in the top passage, and paddle after it with a brush, swirling it along the corridors and down the stairs. This plan answers capitally in a house with stone passages and marble stairs. It is more doubtful where only wood is used, and yet even with this drawback it is exhilarating enough to enter your house in the middle of a hot morning and be met first by a sound of vigorous brushing and singing, and next by a cascade of soapy water rushing down the front stairs, while two bare feet and an edge of petticoat fill the top of the picture.

Many households, aware of the difficulty of finding a well-trained woman servant, prefer a "houseman" to a "housemaid." It must be confessed that he performs his duties with a delicate finish, superior to anything we know in England. He turns down a bed at night with a sprig of rosemary resting on the folded corner of the sheet; night attire is skilfully arranged as though its owner were expecting to dive into it from above; the morning cup of tea is served with a bouquet of flowers.

The Gardener.—To see the gardeners of Athens one must visit the square outside the Church of St. Irene on Sunday morning between six and noon. Here the nurserymen bring their young fruit trees, euonymus, pepper, and plane-trees, and a variety of flowering shrubs and plants, and here the gardeners come to replenish their stocks. Here also come the peasants, stalwart

descendants of Aristophanes' Acharnians, their country carts filled with arbutus and young pines torn from the flanks of Parnes.

The flowers are few and disappointing. Owing to the dread of phylloxera it is difficult for foreign varieties of plants to be introduced into the country, and there is a certain sameness in the pansies, violets, anemones, iris, and rosemary that fill all the gardens. Roses do capitally. One can fill a garden with roses and wish for nothing else all spring, yet even here I doubt whether an English gardener would not shake his head. There are few of the named varieties with their rare and perfect blooms; instead one finds a variety of tea-rose, prolific in blossom, the effusive banksia, and the "seven sisters rose," with its knots of small pink buds that will riot over any untidy corner, making the wilderness rejoice. Give it a bit of marble column, or a flight of steps to festoon, and you have an Alma Tadema picture in a twelve-month.

It is the young trees that are most tempting in the gardeners' market. One may buy twenty young orange-trees for something like thirty shillings, and their golden lamps will brighten the garden the winter through. Lemons and musmula are equally moderate in price, and their glossy leaves are most desirable, apart from their good fruit harvest. Kukunaria pines, pepper-trees, planes, eucalyptus, suggest fragrant groves in the future. Given a regular supply of water, the baby tree from the market grows into a healthy stripling at once, and in five years' time will be shading a tea-table. The long patience of the English forester is not needed here. The trees in the market are only specimens from the gardens outside the town at Ambelokepi, Kolokythou, or Tatoï.

In the gardeners' market we meet our own gardener, Constantine, looking unrecognizably trim in his Sunday

clothes, and having talked over the purchase with him the order for trees is given. The next day the man of Acharnæ arrives with a cart and delivers fifty fragrant little pines into the hands of our grim, silent giant. The man of Acharnæ has filled his cart with arbutus boughs and heather as padding for the little trees on their journey. He wears a beautiful rough blue frock, with long blue leggings, and seems to have brought a cartload of country sweetness into the garden. I should like to plant him there beside his trees. One of the little pines has a heath clinging to its roots, and the silent giant puts them in together, saying that "it does not do to separate brothers." It needs two men to plant the little trees; one holds the tree in place while the other stamps around the roots. A cartload of good earth must be put in with each tree and the cost of the earth is usually more than the price of the tree. The gardener gets himself a helper on these occasions, a red-eyed man called Janni. To-day his eyes are redder than ever, for he has lost his mother. When I begin to express some sympathy, Constantine interrupts brusquely, "It does not matter, she was very old"; adding in an aside, "If you say anything to him about it he will go away and will not do any more work."

Constantine has no sympathy for any sorrows but his own. He goes about his delicious occupation looking as careworn as a judge. He sighs deeply as I watch him at his work and hitches his big trousers over his big hips and draws his belt a hole tighter. He is always tightening his belt. At first I feared it was hunger, but now I know it is habit. When he looks particularly gloomy we sometimes question him about his home life—a breach of etiquette, but the sound of those sighs is irresistible. We can never make out that any greater sorrow has befallen him than another addition to his family, but I admit that it happens too frequently. Like

all other Greeks, he is a man of resource. Having cherished through the winter a little grass plot that we hoped would turn into an English lawn, there arose the question of a lawn-mower. "Never mind," said Constantine, "I will borrow one from a friend." The lawn was mown successfully through the spring, and it was not till the end of the season that we thought of asking the name of its kind owner. "It belongs to the Heir," said Constantine nonchalantly. "The Crown Prince! Oh, Constantine!" Constantine looked reproachful as he answered soothingly, "What would you have? There is but the one lawn-mower in Athens."

And if Constantine borrows his friends' goods for our service it must not be forgotten that he also makes use of our property for his own friends. There was the "affair of the goat" that puzzled and disconcerted us for some time. Herds of goats continually grazed outside our Temenos gate, and there was one goat that persistently found its way into the enclosure. Time after time it was hounded out at night, only to be heard bleating there again in the early morning. At last our patience was exhausted and we impounded it in the back yard, waiting for its owner to come and seek for it in penitence. He came, but in no contrite spirit.

"Why have you shut up my goat?" he demanded angrily.

"Your goat was eating our grass," we replied; "not once, but many times."

"But have I not given good money for your grass?" he responded. "Do I not pay your gardener each time the goat comes inside your ground for the night?"

When remonstrated with, Constantine admitted the offence, but apparently regarded us as niggardly and censorious for quenching his commercial ardour. It seems as though the opportunity to make a little money in an improper way is a far sorer temptation to some

spirits than that of taking money outright. One excellent Greek manservant wrecked an otherwise promising career in London by using his pantry window as a sponge shop. His friends in Athens sent him large consignments of sponges and these were retailed at a profit, to tradesmen and others who frequented the house.

There was always something awful about this silent, melancholy gardener of ours, with his bare feet, his big knife, and his intimacy with the great ones of the earth ; but I was only once really frightened by him. I was going my rounds with a petroleum can, leaving a few drops of oil on the little cisterns from which he irrigates the garden and in which the mosquitoes breed. The proceeding was unpopular with him, for he had no faith in its effects on the mosquitoes and suspected an evil influence on the flowers. On this particular day he came striding across the garden shouting at me. I took no heed and went on with my job. At last he came up to me, repeated the loud unknown word, and then put out his tongue and hissed. I fled, and it was not until the evening that my interpreter explained that Constantine had been trying to warn me of a dangerous snake which he had seen in the tangled flower-beds.

This, by the way, is one more illustration of a fact constantly brought home by life in a foreign country, namely that superfluous kindness is the most fruitful source of misunderstanding. You admire a peasant woman's baby and she spits at it to avert the evil eye. You try to photograph a beautiful child and she runs away in terror. You offer her eggs or sandwiches and she throws them to the ground because the Church is fasting. On the other hand also we shrink when our muleteer offers us a titbit of smoked octopus which he has drawn out of his sash. We are half-hearted about the unripe artichokes that some friendly peasant presses

upon us and we do not care much for the amateur guides and interpreters who attach themselves to us in gratuitous and quite disinterested kindness.

There are many pitfalls on the unfamiliar ground ; our best motives are misunderstood ; our kindest actions prove unkindness. For a time at least we must be content to stand apart in a silent benevolence. But when this stage is passed, when the ground is no longer unfamiliar, when we have learned to understand and to make ourselves understood, there follows a rich reward. Mutual distrust slowly changes into a friendship which never quite loses its glamour. As foreigners we are still surrounded with a halo of romantic interest that assuredly does not belong to us at home. Even our oddities seem attractive. And to us our Greek friends are jewels in a goodly setting. Thoughts of them are tinged with memories of their radiant country, the tingling air, the luminous hill-sides, the uplifted Acropolis.

CHAPTER XIII

THE ATTIC COUNTRY-SIDE

I

DWELLERS ON THE SOIL

FOR permanent residence Athens has not the inexhaustible resources of most old towns, but as a centre for daily expeditions she is rivalled only by Rome. In early spring the tide of flowers overflows her doorsteps and the country calls irresistibly. Within the radius of an afternoon's walk you may visit the gorge of Chalandri, famous for its blood-red anemones; or the rather desolate little hill of Colonos; or you may explore the *hinterland* of the Tourkovouni range and find yourself at once in a world whose neighbourhood you little suspected. The low, sweet-smelling shrubs spread over the open country give this the character of a Greek moorland. The town is hidden from view by the spurs of Lycabettus, and here and there the symmetrical masses of a pine throw a broad blot of shadow over the red earth and silver-green vegetation. If you prefer the cultivated ground take the tram to the market gardens of Kolokythou and spend an hour among the narcissus and violets; you will get a new idea of the Acropolis when you see it framed by the flowering branches of the almond and peach-trees. Those gardens are full of pictures. Large open tanks reflect dark cypresses

and pink blossom, with the changing mauve and grey shadows on the hills behind.

Attica is above all things the place for a pedestrian. Whereas carriage-roads are scarce, a good walker can always strike a line for himself from one landmark to another and find on the way a hundred delights unrecorded in Baedeker. The familiar hills take unfamiliar shapes, the long coast gives an assurance of some sea-view from every height, the undulating lines of the middle distance are sometimes firm and shapely where the rocky framework of the country shows itself, or blurred and rounded where the low growth covers it with a grey veil. Here and there the stony stretches are broken by the figure of a shepherd with his herd of black and white sheep and goats. In the open country all is austere and dun, except where the candid blue of the sea runs up into the landscape and lies in the midst of it like a jewel. Among the stones grow low sweet-smelling shrubs of a soft inconspicuous grey-green.

There is, however, a significance in the gravity of Attica's flowing lines and the reserve of its colouring; dun and sepia and white. It is like a restful statement of essential fact; there is no sensational episode, no headlong cataract, no Byronic precipice, but instead an ordered tranquillity, waiting only for the inspiration of dawn or sunset to flash into unbelievable purple and gold. Those who have seen a crimson evening turn into a twilight where purple lingers on into the night will never again say that Attic scenery is wanting in colour. Nevertheless, it is not for these supreme moments that Attica must be loved, but rather for the subtleties of her noonday harmonies and the poetry of her barren places.

The real spring of the Attic year follows the first rains in October. It is affectionately known as "the little summer of Saint Demetrius," but in reality it is less summer than spring. The trees put out new green buds,

a fresh crop of grass covers the brown slopes, and the plants which have their period of repose during the summer drought begin to flower. The roses which came to an end with June now blossom again. The woods are full of crocus and cyclamen. In November the temperature falls rapidly. Τοῦ Ἀγίου Ἀνδρέου ἀνδρέει ζῶκρ' οὐο,¹ says the old proverb. During the winter there is much rain, the winds are bitterly cold, and there may be snow or frost. There is, however, usually a spell of fine warm days in December or January. These seem to have been long characteristic of the Athenian climate. To the ancients they were known as the halcyon days (ἁλκυνονίδες). In midwinter a fortnight of warm weather was looked for, during which the sea was calm and the halcyon (kingfisher) could build its nest on the sea. February has the reputation of being the month for rain, March for wind. The statistics taken at the Observatory during the last fifty years show that there is usually a cold side to March. In April the temperature is ideal, though strong breezes make it better for travel on land than by water. May is the month for cruising. It is also the harvest-month, for the corn is cut for fodder while still green. By June the summer heats have already begun. The hot weather lasts till October, and the most trying time of the year comes towards the end of September, before the fall of the first rains.

On the whole the climate of Attica seems much the same to-day as it was two thousand years ago. The greatest difference is found in the diminished rainfall due to the disappearance of the forests. Yet even this difference cannot be excessive, as both Plutarch and Strabo show that all the rivulets of Attica, including even the Cephissus, ran dry in summer. The dryness

¹ An untranslatable play on words: "With Saint Andrew's Day the cold increases."

of the Attic climate is due not to a low rainfall but to an extremely rapid evaporation. It is this that gives the atmosphere its peculiar scintillating brilliance; the dryness of the air reveals minute detail in distant objects, and yet there is a tremulous vibration in the light which restores to the view that touch of unreality which the exceeding clearness might have destroyed. The Athenians of Euripides' day "walk with delicate feet through the most luminous ether." Ovid sees the hills round Athens through a purple glow, and from before the days of Plutarch, the Athenians loved to trace a naïve connection between the keenness of their intellect and the fine Attic atmosphere. The simile pleases still. The mind of the Greek thinker had indeed something akin to this atmospheric quality that pierces to a definite truth without losing the luminous vision of the poet.

The Bœotians who lived in a heavier climate were considered dull and boorish. "Bœotian swine" Pindar calls them. There was not much wrong with them really, but like many another they suffered from being set beside a more brilliant neighbour. They were the Teutons and the men of Athens were the Gauls of ancient time.

The details of Attic landscape are often unlovely. There are crumbling mud walls, dilapidated balconies, and untidy corners in every village. Man's handiwork when it is not unfinished is out of repair, and this is a depressing fact which Nature does not attempt to hide. Here is no luxuriant vegetation to screen heaps of rubbish behind a tangle of dog-rose. There are no creepers to hold together the rafters of a stooping house. There seems little actual want in Attica, but the living is hard. Poverty, which in Italy is picturesque, in Greece becomes ugly. The garments both of men and women are of solid homespun cotton, made in cool light shades, blue, grey, or white. The kerchiefs wrapped round head and throat are usually white or pale yellow. Clean white is

the luxury of the Greek peasant. It is exhilarating to see the energy with which a woman cheerfully washes at the spring the eighteen yards of white cotton that compose her husband's *fustanella* (kilt), as well as his white felt leggings and rough woollen coat, and the pride with which he dons his clean kilt on a feast day and swaggers down the street with the ample folds swinging from the solid leather pouch on his waist.

A dirty *fustanella* is very seldom seen except on an Albanian. The true Albanian never washes his. The Greek, on the other hand, is scrupulous in his love of clean linen.

The absence of strong colour in the dress of the Greek peasants may be a heritage from Turkish times when the wearing of red was punishable by death and the highest ambition of the Greek was to remain inconspicuous.

On feast days the pale tints of country cotton give way to a parade of colour. The women wear embroidery on their sleeves, jackets, aprons, skirts, and handkerchiefs; and as many gold ornaments as possible are added. The men have embroidered jackets and waistcoats and bright scarves round their waists. Until a few years ago the colours of these embroideries were taken from rich vegetable dyes.

The plain of Athens is sheltered to some extent by its circle of hills, but Athens gets a cold spell when Parnes and Pentelicus are themselves snow-covered. Leake with dry humour speaks of the Cephissian Plain as being "inconveniently ventilated."

The population of modern Attica is composed of three distinct races. The town is the home of the Greek proper. The blood in his veins is mingled, but in default of more direct heirs he claims the heritage of the ancient race. The language that he speaks is more closely allied to classical Greek than Italian is to Latin.

A traveller of the seventeenth century reports that the Greek language is being corrupted "not so much by the mixture of other tongues as through a supine recklessness." He adds, however, that "there be yet of the Laconians that speak so good Greek (though not grammatically) that they understand the learned and understand not the vulgar." The Greek language as spoken to-day contains foreign elements, but the body of the language is still there. Thanks to the spread of education and the ardent patriotism of the Press it is rapidly changing, and wherever possible classical roots are introduced. The living, vigorous tongue of the peasant population is being overlaid with this newspaper jargon, and it is strange to see how even a man of no education seems to grasp instinctively the meaning of a classical term when he hears it for the first time. The next generation will hardly be able to understand the language of the Klephtic ballads.

The country districts are populated by industrious Albanians. They seem more Greek than the Greeks themselves. They are probably Illyrians and have lived under conditions similar to those which formed the races who came into Greece from the North. They fought like lions through the War of Independence and on the nation's resurrection their dress was chosen as the national costume. The King's guard is largely recruited from these strapping highlanders, who look very fine in their clean white kilts and jackets embroidered with black for everyday wear, and with gold for full dress.

The oldest Albanian settlement in Greece seems to date from the eleventh century, but throughout the ages and especially during the seventeenth century the Greek stock has been invigorated by the influx of these hardy mountaineers. In the fourteenth century Pedro IV of Aragon, one of the Spanish absentee Dukes of

Athens, found his districts so much depopulated that he offered the Albanians two years' exemption from taxes if they would settle in Attica. They retain their own language, and the women in the remoter villages often have no Greek. The peaceful invasion is still going on and the mountains rear a race of men who reinforce the feebler stock in the plains.

The third race is the shepherd Vlachs, whose original home was, as their name implies, in Wallachia. Racially they are a most interesting study. It is seldom that one people lives long within the borders of another without losing its individuality. Not so the Vlachs. They are a shepherd people, making no permanent settlements and still retaining a tribal organization. The shepherd-chief is father and lawgiver for the tribe. Intermarriage with Greeks or Albanians is forbidden. In winter they bring their flocks to the low ground. The foot of Hymettus is one of their favourite haunts. In summer their settlements are seen high up among the hills. Like Swiss and Norwegians and other pastoral highlanders, their life is regulated by the migration from summer pasturage in the hills to winter pasturage in the plains. They dwell partly in tents, partly in strange dome-shaped huts built of earth or sticks: there are also shelters for the sheep and lambs, and the whole circular enclosure is fenced in with a low wattled barrier. Seen from below it looks like a brown fungus growth on the mountain-side. Seen close at hand brown is still the prevailing tint. In the shade of the nut-brown house a brown mother sits nursing a brown baby, while brown sheep and goats saunter round the pen. The only note of contrast in this general brownness is found in the wrappings of the baby and the white coats of some of the flock—but all are slowly merging into the general harmony. These settlements are often left to the care of the

women while the men are away on the hills. They are therefore guarded by fierce dogs, the only real enemies that need be feared in Attica. I shall never forget my reception on visiting a Vlach settlement on the lower slopes of Hymettus. As I crossed the bridge of the stream dividing the village from the road every little hut sent out a dog, and no sooner was my foot on the further shore than the whole pack came down upon me like an army. Fortunately it was by no means a silent army and the tumult brought some Vlach women to their doors. Seeing that I belonged to their own harmless sex, they called the dogs off and made me welcome in their smoky little wigwams. Experience shows that if we leave the settlements at a safe distance it is not likely that the dogs will molest us. As a race the Vlachs are thrifty and generous. Many of the stately public buildings in Athens have been built by patriotic Vlachs who have died rich men and left their fortunes to their country.

The Greeks, the Albanians, the Vlachs, these are the three races that now hold the lands of Attica. It is fruitless to discuss their exact relationship to their predecessors the Ancient Greeks. Each individual unconsciously seems to reveal his origin, from Greek or barbarian, from slave or freeman. On some mountain-side a beautiful woman greets us with a bend of the head so perfect in its measured gravity that we feel at once that we are in the presence of the lineal descendant of some old Greek or Byzantine house. Some peasant-host, sharing our evening meal, shows those instinctive good manners which remind us of a civilization that was old when our forefathers were but naked hunters.

As regards the humbler dwellers on the soil, the flora and fauna of Attica, much has been lost even within the memory of this generation. From the descriptions of travellers in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries we

know that Attica was once rich in singing-birds, game, and wild animals. Chandler mentions doves, pigeons, thrushes, wild turkeys, the red-legged partridge, woodcock, snipe, teal, widgeon, duck, owls, and cranes. He also throws some light on their disappearance. "There is," he says, "a small bird called by the Greeks *Sycophas* (fig-birds), because when the figs are ripe they settle in quantities on the trees. If frightened away they return almost immediately, and a person sitting concealed may fire upon them with little intermission. They are eaten roasted entire, each in a vine leaf, and are counted a delicacy." Alas for the greed of bird and peasant! The woods are silent now, except when the warmth of summer brings the irrepressible nightingale. As regards the larger animals, Chandler mentions wolves, deer, and foxes. Boars and roe-deer are still found in the royal preserves on Pentelicus: jackals and foxes are not uncommon. Wolves are no longer found in Attica, but they become a terror in Northern Greece when the cold drives them down from the hills.

The most deplorable change that has come over Attica since ancient times is the disappearance of the forests, already alluded to. There is reason to believe that all the hills round Athens, including even the barren shoulders of Hymettus, were once covered with trees, but until the last few years nothing has been done to preserve them. The goats eat the young trees; the charcoal-burners help themselves where they will; the landowners cut down without replanting, while the pines are gashed for resin. Lastly, whole stretches are laid waste by fire, either as the result of carelessness or by shepherds who wish to make new pasture for their flocks. The disappearance of the trees is followed by the disappearance of the plants which they have sheltered, and after the plant-life has gone the soil is soon washed by rain from the steep hill-sides. What has

been a wood becomes a bare rock, and the evil that has been done seems irremediable. There is now a forestry league in Athens which is doing much good work in setting young plantations on the lower hills which still keep their soil, but in the older forests it is to be feared that the destruction still goes on.

The introduction of orange and lemon-trees has also done much to alter the appearance of the country. In Attica these are only found in enclosed gardens, occasional patches of heavy green. We must go to the stretch of coast opposite the Island of Poros to know what Greek lemon-groves can be, and to the plains of Laconia to see the oranges at their best. There they stretch for miles and the air is fragrant with their blossom.

Attica's wealth of spring flowers comes as a surprise to any one who has seen it first at the barren seasons of the year. The late Professor Heldreich, the most amiable of men, and for many years Director of the Botanical Gardens in Athens, studied the Attic flora and divided them into four natural groups: like the tribes of old we have the flowers of the coast, the plains, and the hills; to these he adds a fourth group, the flowers of the mountains, *i.e.* those that grow above an altitude of 2,000 feet. Below 2,000 feet the flora is almost identical with that of the western Mediterranean; there are only eight varieties found that belong to the East rather than to the West. On the higher ground the oriental varieties increase with each upward stage. The group of mountain plants is the richest and most interesting in Greece, and deserves a more specialized study than has yet been given to it. In Attica the best hunting-ground for the botanist is on the upper ranges of Parnes and Pentelicus.

The slopes of the lower hills are mostly covered with different varieties of evergreen shrubs with thick fleshy

leaves. This type of shrub is sometimes collectively known by the Corsican name *Maquis*, and the plants here are known as those of the Maquis region. Myrtle (*Myrtis communis*), Arbutus in three kinds (*Andrachne*, *Intermedia*, and *Unedo*), Rhamnus (*Rhamnus gracca*), and Lentisc (*Pistachia lentiscus*) are frequently found growing together to a height of three or four feet, with little bells or bright berries shining among the heavy green foliage.

Ovid gives a fragrant list of the plants that grew on Hymettus: "The Arbutus, the Rosemary, the Laurel, the dark Myrtle, the leafy Box, the frail Tamarisk, the slender Cytisus, and the graceful Pine."¹

Below the hill region come low sterile slopes of limestone or mica. From the distance they look quite barren and are locally known as *Xerovouna*, or "desert hills." On approaching them we find that they are covered with small bushy plants of a type entirely different from those of the Maquis region. Instead of green fleshy foliage, these have small grey-green leaves usually covered with tiny hairs. These hairs protect the leaf from the rapid evaporation, which would otherwise scorch the tender surface. They enable the plant to absorb each drop of moisture slowly and to hold its own in a shadeless region. To the Greeks this type of plant is known by the collective name *Phrygana*, literally "fuel," for which the nearest English equivalent is "brushwood," but the English conveys something much less delightful than that which the Athenian thinks of when he speaks of *Phrygana*. These low-growing shrubs have a spicy fragrance comparable only to the sweetness of a Scotch moor, yet whereas the Scotch moor is fragrant of one plant only these Greek moors have a very symphony of scents. Heath (*Erica arborea*), Thyme (*Thymus capitatus*), Lavender (*Lavandula stoe-*

¹ Ovid, "Ars Amatoria," iii. 687 ff.

chas), Broom (*Genista acanthoclada*), and Cistus (*Cistus creticus* and *salviaefolius*), each in turn remind you sweetly of their presence while your feet crush their leaves.

In former times this fragrant undergrowth must have come right up to the walls of Athens, but now Athens, like many other eastern cities, is surrounded by an increasing circle of desolation. The brushwood is used as fuel for bakers' ovens. There are peasants who make their livelihood by cutting it in the country and bringing it into the town on donkeys. The fuel weighs light and is piled high, so that the beast seems lost in his load. A string of seven or eight such donkeys may be met trotting into the town on any fine morning. Each has a bell and each bell a different note. The peasants striding behind add their own musical cries to the harmony. A brushwood-gatherer seems always in morning spirits, and indeed his calling is a merry one. When the brushwood is stripped from the slopes, the land inevitably becomes a desert, for many delicate flowers such as Anemone (*Anemone coronaria*), Catchfly (*Silene vespertina*), Grape Hyacinth (*Muscari commutatum*); and the Love-in-a-mist (*Nigella arvensis*) of English cottage gardens are now left without any shelter and their roots are quickly parched.

The flowers of the plains include those found in river-beds as well as the flowers of cultivated fields and fallow ground. The most conspicuous in the former category is the beautiful Oleander (*Nerium oleander*), which marks the hidden moisture of a river-bed long after its surface is a summer furnace. In the cultivated fields travellers from Wheler onwards have not failed to mark the glowing *Papaver Rhæas*. It is abundant as our English poppy, but of a deeper crimson, with a rich black centre shaped like a heart. In the more sheltered places the scarlet anemone spreads another crimson carpet. The flowers of this region are so



LOADS OF FUEL

numerous that it seems impossible to select any as specially characteristic. They star the olive-groves like the foreground of a Pre-Raphaelite picture, and shine like Dante's vision of the meadow over which Matilda walked—"la gran variazion dei freschi Mai." The flowering fruit-trees are a joy in February and March. There is every shade of pink blossom, from the pale flush of the quince to the blood-red pomegranate flower hanging on slender down-dragged branches. The unfruitful Judas tree is a deep magenta rose. On such a tree, says legend, the faithless disciple hanged himself, and the tree must still bear blossoms of crimson guilt.

The flowers of the coast region are inconspicuous and sturdy little fellows, growing on the sandy dunes or in the salt marshes by the seashore. They lay no claim to beauty, but greet us as friends and fellow-travellers when we recognize among them many that are equally at home on the shores of our own North Sea.

II

AN ATTIC CEMETERY

The Athenian Ceramicus is still sheeted in spring with Asphodel. In itself the plant is hardly beautiful. The straight juicy stem bears small scentless flowers of a dim pink, each petal marked with a darker crimson stripe. The leaves, rich and glossy, are left behind by the tall spike of blossom. Yet without colour and without grace there is a fascination in the Asphodel that is not only due to its beautiful name and to its association with Greek poetry. Where it grows in abundance there is an effect of pale-rose waves, almost foamy in lightness, rising from the cold blue-green shadow of the foliage. Was it only because it grew in the cemeteries outside their city walls that the Greeks made the Asphodel the flower of death,

the only flower in Hades? Or was it also something mysterious, colourless, scentless, lifeless in the flower itself?

This Athenian cemetery still has many of the old tombstones in place. Though it now lies inside the town, it gives a clear impression of how those old Greek burial-grounds looked as they lined the road outside each city gate. Recent excavations have shown that the monuments for the most part rose high above the pavement, set on courses of masonry that made the walk between seem bordered with high walls. But the wall was not continuous. Each tomb had its own slightly different angle, and in the monuments themselves there was an infinite variety. Many of these have been taken to the Central Museum, but some are still left in place. Most conspicuous among them is the figure of a fine bull standing on a pedestal. The significance of this bull as a memorial has never been fully explained, although the use of animals on grave reliefs is not unusual. The bull was probably emblematical of some quality of strength or ferocity in the character of the departed—a "John Bull" of the fifth century B.C.

Near the bull is a beautiful relief representing a woman drawing a necklace from a box held in front of her by a serving-girl. It is early fourth-century work; the production of a nameless artist at the best period of Greek art. There is a perfect reposeful grace in the lines of the lady's figure as she leans languidly back in a chair, whose simple lines are only in one place interrupted by her falling draperies. The slave, seen in much lower relief, is a mere sketch with the chisel, indicating a young girl, her figure clearly shown under the slight robe.

A little further on is another tombstone of about the same date. This shows the young warrior Dexileos, who was killed in the Corinthian War of 394 B.C. In this engagement the Athenians were defeated, yet Dexileos

is represented as triumphantly striking down a prostrate foe. The attitude is exactly that adopted by modern artists for the presentation of Saint George and the Dragon. I was not astonished to observe one countryman actually point out this relief as *Hagios Georgios*.

These two tombstones of Hegeso and Dexileos are both typical of the whole spirit that animates the rich collection of Attic tombstones from archaic times to the Hellenistic age. In all of them the note struck seems to be the wish to perpetuate one day out of the good life that has vanished rather than to dwell on the thought of death.

The woman sits at her toilet or with her children. The man sets out for the chase or charges the enemy; the boy toys with his pet animal and the girl with her doll. In no instance is there any hint of the hope of a future life that will be worth living. If the soul survives the shock of death, its existence in Hades is as a shadow among the shadows out of sight of the sun. In spite of the hopelessness of this belief the spirit of the tombstones is not one of despair, but rather the expression of a quiet melancholy. It is not until the decadence of Greek art has set in that the thought of death is dwelt upon, and then it figures only as a hint in the clasped hands of parting; the departed is still presented in the full vigour of his earthly life. In spite of the spiritual hopes of the later age sepulchral art of Christian times has inclined to melancholy, whereas Greek art was cheerful. The maker of the Greek grave-relief did not emphasize the fact that his subject had died, neither did he seek to reproduce an exact likeness. He merely represented a personality of general suitability as to age and figure. The Christian sculptor from the Renaissance onwards has not hesitated to give to grief its utmost sting, and has combined a personal likeness of the deceased with a figure in which the cold tones of

the stone emphasize the death-like rigidity of the features. It is in the robust age of good Queen Bess that we come nearest to the spirit of Athens ; the funeral monuments of Tudor England show the good folk kneeling upright at their prayers, with a certain restrained convention of attitude that has something distantly akin to the Greek spirit.

The two large rooms in the National Museum at Athens are filled with ancient Greek *stelæ* similar to those still standing in the Ceramicus. Were it not for the epitaphs preserved, one might almost be tempted to suppose that the Greek had made his final triumph in the art of living and had learned to think without dread of that last parting. The epitaphs, however, tell a different story. Their very brevity adds a note of poignancy to the sorrow.

This is the single tomb of Nicander's children ; the light of a single morning ended the sacred offspring of Lysidice.

Looking on the monument of a dead boy, Cleostes son of Menesacchmus, pity him who was beautiful and died.

Sometimes the epitaph supplies the personal note that the sculpture denies :

Blue-eyed Musa, the sweet-voiced nightingale, suddenly this little grave holds voiceless and she lies like a stone, who was so accomplished and so famous ; fair Musa, be this dust light over thee.

The daughters of the Samians often require Crethis the teller of tales, who knew pretty games, sweetest of workfellows, ever-talking ; but she sleeps here the sleep to which all must come.

Even the dog is wept for :

Thou who passest on the path, if haply thou dost mark this monument, laugh not, I pray thee, though it is a dog's grave ; tears

fell for me, and the dust was heaped above me by a master's hands, who likewise engraved these words on my tomb.

These brief verses bridge the centuries and more than any other relics of Greek art draw us into fellowship with the tender domestic side of Athenian life; a side which, but for this evidence, might be overlooked. It is often suggested that the engrossing claims of citizenship made the family life seem unimportant, but these epitaphs tell a different tale.

Comparing their spirit with the calm philosophy of the reliefs, the difference is striking. It may be that the Greeks felt that the intangible beauty of words allowed a more poignant representation of grief than was permissible in the medium of graven stone.

The moment to visit the Street of Tombs is a morning in early spring while the dew is still on the grass and the Asphodels shine in the low sun on that

Slope of green access,
Where like an infant's smile over the dead,
A light of laughing flowers along the grass is spread.

It was in the early morning that the Athenians brought out their dead for burial. Before the sun rose the funeral procession would pass the Sacred Gate and along the Street of Tombs. The body with the face uncovered was carried through the streets on a litter. The fare for Charon (who would ferry the spirit across the river Styx) was placed in the mouth of the corpse and on tables beside it were carried provisions of honey-cakes for the last journey, vases of ointments or perfumes, and perhaps a sword or mirror showing whether the deceased was man or woman. Mourners with cropped hair followed the bier, wailing and clad in black.

The great public cemetery seems to have been the

especial haunt of the Athenian women. The white Lekythoi vases which were used for funeral libations have appropriate paintings, and show us groups of mourners bringing their offerings of food with garlands and sashes to deck the tomb. Even after the enlightened Greek intelligence had ceased to regard the body as in some way hovering round the grave, the old funeral customs were continued. Indeed one may question whether they have ever quite died out. In Elis I have seen the bowl of rice and raisins brought to the grave ten days after the burial of the body, and in Thessaly it is still customary in the country villages for the relatives to assemble round the corpse and be presented to it individually and by name.

But the cemetery was not the haunt of women only. Memorial services were also celebrated here in public as in the great scene which Thucydides describes:—

“During the same winter in accordance with an old national custom, the funeral of those who first fell in this war was celebrated by the Athenians at the public charge. The ceremony is as follows: Three days before the celebration they erect a tent in which the bones of the dead are laid out, and every one brings to his own dead any offering which he pleases. At the time of the funeral the bones are placed in chests of cypress wood, which are conveyed on hearses; there is one chest for each tribe. They also carry a single empty litter decked with a pall for all whose bodies are missing and cannot be recovered after the battle. The procession is accompanied by any one who chooses, whether citizen or stranger, and the female relatives of the deceased are present at the place of interment and make lamentation. The public sepulchre is situated in the most beautiful spot outside the walls; there they always bury those who fall in war.”

The time was 431 B.C. The first year of the Pelo-

ponnesian War was over ; a year which had on the whole been favourable to Athens. The dead whom they now honoured with a public funeral had fallen in fair fight at Phrygia and at Megara. The numbers of the slain were not great. There was nothing to hint at the overwhelming misfortunes soon to overtake the city. Still, the occasion was a memorable one. The youth of Hellas who twelve months ago "had never seen war and were therefore very willing to take up arms" have had their first brush with reality. At Megara they had conquered, but at Phrygia they had been forced to accept defeat. They had endured the still harder discipline of staying inactive behind the walls of Athens while the land of Attica was laid waste. The power of Pericles was as great as ever though his popularity had lessened, as Thucydides shows :—

"The excitement in the city was universal ; the people were furious with Pericles, and forgetting all his previous warnings they abused him for not leading them to battle, as their general should, and laid all their miseries to his charge."

Still it was Pericles who was chosen to speak the funeral oration over these first victims of the war. Perhaps his measured words of commendation fell coldly on ears eager to drink in the praises of their fallen heroes and hearts anxious as they looked to the future ? There were no honeyed praises for individual soldiers. "They are worthy of Athens," he says, and in that brief phrase crowns them ; the few words of consolation to the mourners have an almost perfunctory sound : "Congratulate yourselves that you have been happy during the greater part of your days ; remember that your life of sorrows will not last long, and be comforted by the glory of those who are gone." Yet this funeral oration which Thucydides puts into the mouth of Pericles is one of the most moving and enlightening pieces of prose

among all that have survived in the Greek tongue. It is Athens that he glorifies and not the men who died for her, "for in magnifying the city I have magnified them and men like them who made her glorious. . . . In the hour of trial Athens alone among her contemporaries is superior to the report of her. No enemy who comes against her is indignant at the reverses which he sustains at the hands of such a city ; no subject complains that his masters are unworthy of him. And we shall assuredly not be without witnesses ; there are mighty monuments of our power which will make us the wonder of this and succeeding ages ; we shall not need the praises of Homer or of any other panegyrist whose poetry may please for the moment, although his representation of facts will not bear the light of day. For we have compelled every land and every sea to open a path for our valour, and have everywhere planted eternal memorials of our friendship and our security. Such is the city for whose sake these men nobly fought and died ; they could not bear the thought that she might be taken from them ; and every one of us who survive should gladly toil on her behalf."

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The procession winds out of sight ; a blue haze of smoke and thin tongues of flame show that the bodies are being burned. Silently the mourners return home for the funeral feast. And now a knot of women pass. They carry baskets hung with ribbons and garlands of parsley and violets. They are coming to decorate a grave on the birthday of the dead, or to pay the ceremonial visit on the third, ninth, or thirteenth day after death. Their white draperies hardly stir the sheath-like leaves of the Asphodel. They are the ghosts of the Ceramicus.

III

THE SACRED WAY

Through the Ceramicus and over the Pass of Corydallus runs the white road to Eleusis—the Sacred Way.

The last time that I saw Eleusis was on a cloudless day in March. Sleepy horses pulled us leisurely up the Pass of Daphne. Blue and white butterflies hung over the young corn, where there was promise of an exceptional harvest, "if there be sun enough," said our driver, then crossed himself and murmured the more pious expression, "if the Lord send us the sun." At the top of the pass the cornfields gave way to a groundwork of stone and scrub dotted with gay flowers. I remember the fragrant grape-hyacinth, blue as lapis lazuli, and the crimson anemones glowing in the sun like brimming wine-cups. The pines grew closely with a fine velvet sheen on their rounded tops.

As the hills closed behind us shutting Athens from our view, it was as though some spell had fallen, as though the closing of the hills had shut a gate upon the outer world and brought us into an enchanted garden. Was it Pan who lingered here, or Apollo, or "dear Aphrodite," whose shrine and rock-cut inscription wait at the next turn of the road? Or was it the ghost-thoughts left by processions of singing *Mystæ* who passed so many times along this road?

Early in the morning, not on such spring days as this, but in the burning month of September, the worshippers of Demeter left the Eleusinium at Athens and reached Eleusis by torchlight. Seeing that our sleepy horses only took two and a half hours to cover the twelve miles, it puzzled us to think how the *Mystæ* could have spent the whole day upon the road. To be sure there was the jesting at the bridge over the Cephissus,

when masked peasants mocked the pilgrims and the holy Mystæ condescended to some buffoonery with their tormentors. No doubt also there were offerings to be made at the shrines of Zeus, of Cyamites the bean-giver, of Apollo, and "dear Aphrodite," and finally at the tomb of Eumolpus. Still even with these delays one cannot think that those who left Athens at dawn were the same as those who reached Eleusis by torchlight; it rather seems probable that all through the day the straggling procession of pilgrims poured out through the Sacred Gate. Some would prefer the early start and accomplish the dusty climb to Daphni before the heat of the day; others would be delayed by toilet or household affairs until mid-morning, and others again would start in the cool of the evening, and for them would be the dramatic arrival by torchlight in the Hall of the Mystæ.

At Daphni we halted for lunch, and, falling under the spell of that blessed spot, nearly gave up the expedition to Eleusis that we might pass the whole day with Apollo of the Laurels. While I was sitting in the church puzzling over the marred beauty of the mosaics, the solitude was broken by the entrance of a Greek priest and a blind man. The priest lit his three candles and placed his penny in the plate with a professional jest to the custodian. The blind man smiled, fumbled in his pockets, and handed to the custodian his three home-made candles, made of yellow wax from honeycomb. "Are they good?" he asked proudly. "Very good," approved the Phylax, with grave sympathy, and a look of proud content went over the blind face. Soon we were called to lunch—a luncheon spread on the inevitable little iron table, placed with two massive wooden chairs on the borderland of sunny turf and shadowy pines. Under these conditions a meal becomes a poem.

After luncheon we walked on as far as the shrine of "dear Aphrodite." Where emperors trod the dust we

must at least make a part of our pilgrimage on foot. Besides, every Greek is born with right to a siesta after his midday meal, and our coachman willingly agreed to wait an hour at Daphni and overtake us at the little ruined temple, with rock-cut niches and the one remaining inscription to "Phile Aphrodite." The stones of the shrine have weathered to the same golden-grey as the surrounding boulders, and its ruins would be hard to find but for the crooked old olive that is our landmark.

From here the road descends and the pass once more opens as the blue Bay of Salamis flashes out. Landlocked as a lake it looks, shut in by the mysterious grey island which the ancients knew as Salamis, but which local affection calls "the baker's roll" (*koulouri*). Beyond this the road is less interesting. Beyond the ridge of Ægaleus it runs between the seashore and the Thriasian Plain. The country inland is level and rather desolate, reminding one of the region round Phalerum. Both have salt marshes won from the sea, and not yet fertile. The salt lakes of Eleusis were sacred to Demeter and Persephone, though what such barren loneliness had to do with the goddesses of fertility it is hard to say. At the far end of the bay the white houses of Eleusis crown a bit of rising ground, and behind them the mountains of Megara show their double peak known as "Kerata," or Horns.

This stretch of road beside the Thriasian Plain is associated with that apparition of immortal mystics who came to succour their countrymen at the darkest hour of the Persian War. Herodotus tells the story on the authority of Dicæus, son of Theocydes, "an Athenian who was at this time an exile and had gained a good report among the Medes. He declared that after the army of Xerxes had, in the absence of the Athenians wasted Attica, he chanced to be with Demaratus the

Lacedæmonian in the Thriasian Plain, and that while there he saw a cloud of dust advancing from Eleusis, such as a host of thirty thousand men might raise. As he and his companion were wondering from whose feet the dust arose a sound of voices reached his ear and he thought that he recognized the mystic hymn to Bacchus. Now Demaratus was unacquainted with the rites of Eleusis and so he inquired of Dicæus what the voices were saying. Dicæus made answer, 'Oh Demaratus! beyond doubt some mighty calamity is about to befall the King (of Persia's) army! For it is manifest inasmuch as Attica is deserted by its inhabitants, that the sound which we have heard is an unearthly one and is now upon its way from Eleusis to aid the Athenians and their confederates Every year the Athenians celebrate this feast to the Mother and the Daughter. The sound thou hearest is the Bacchic song which is wont to be sung at this festival' . . . Such was the tale told by Dicæus, the son of Theocydes, and he appealed for its truth to Demaratus and other eye-witnesses."

The ruins of Eleusis are better on the plan than in reality. The superimposed periods look delightful in their different colours shown on the excavator's plan ("Journal of Greek Archæological Society," 1887), and for English readers they have been lucidly explained by Dyer in his work on the gods of Greece. Standing on the spot it is a hard matter to trace the buildings of each period, and the spirit of the Mysteries vanishes among this jumble of grey stones lying bare to the sky. The beautiful view of sea and hills brings us no nearer to the past, for in the Hall of the Mysteries the outer world was forgotten. But wait till nightfall. Then in the darkness and hush, when the stones have melted out of sight, and the voices of the Albanian women have quieted themselves in the houses near, it becomes more possible to feel the way back to the heart of those mysterious rites

and become one of the host of worshippers adoring "the great, the wonderful, the most perfect object of mystical contemplation, an ear of wheat reaped in silence." And yet how different the silence is even on a still night such as this. For though hardly a breeze stirs and the surf is but a ripple on the beach, faint sounds of animal life are coming up in the darkness. A dog barks in the village. The frogs croak discontentedly in the distant marshes and a bird or bat rustles against the old walls. The Greeks of old knew that silence is not a negative but a positive thing. There is never a complete vacuum of stillness, but only a hushing of the more dominant sounds. The silence of a northern night and of a southern noon, the silence of a forest, a moor, a sea—what resemblance is there between them, and how are they related to this silence of a worshipping multitude who come to Eleusis to learn "the fair and joyful truth that death is not an evil but a blessing to mortals"?¹

In the National Museum of Athens one of the most beautiful of the early reliefs shows a grave matron handing an ear of wheat to a youth while a girl stands by. All three figures are in profile and there is an earnestness of intention suiting the symbolic action. The girl is Persephone, the woman is Demeter, and the youth is Triptolemus, the priest-king of Eleusis to whom Demeter taught the secrets of corn-growing.

This Demeter recalls to me another Demeter seen that hot noonday as we trudged the Sacred Way. On a clump of heath, her back against a fir-tree, sat a woman spinning. It was the hour of rest and her children slept around her. One lay in a cradle slung from the tree, another was on the ground beside her, his head pillowed between her knees. The rhythmic movements of her spinning hands passed to and fro above his head and seemed to weave a slumber-charm. Her brown head and strong neck were

¹ Inscription in Eleusis Museum.

bent over her task, and she sat enthroned on the heath like some old Titaness, one with the simple, industrious, fruitful mother of all. For the sake of hearing her voice I spoke to her. She answered in low tones, "Oh, yes! the children sleep. The day is long to them, poor souls. They sleep—we work"; and she smiled, as Demeter herself might have smiled over the infant Triptolemus—the nurse's smile of wisdom and infinite patience.

IV

PHYLE

A climb that winds itself into the heart of the enclosing hills, that skirts gorge after gorge, and leads you up through thickly-growing pines—one of the few bits of Theocritan scenery in Attica; at the end of three hours a mountain fortress and a superb view—this is what an expedition to Phyle means. The walls of the oblong fortress still show seventeen courses above ground; the closely fitting blocks of stone have a splendid tint of golden-brown bitten by patches of orange lichen. The fortress stands foursquare on the south-west flank of Parnes, and thus holds one of the most important passes into Attica from Bœotia. The other pass is on the north-east of Parnes, Deceleia (p. 333), which lies between Parnes and Pentelicus as Phyle lies between Parnes and Cithæron. Phyle is not, however, set at the highest point of the pass; the force established here would still have unoccupied heights on the north, but as a post of observation its position is unequalled. No boats could slip across the Saronic Gulf, no force of Athenians muster in the plain, no band attempt the passes of Hymettus but the watchman at Phyle would see the lowering of the sail or the light glinting on the spears of moving men. The whole of the Cephissian Plain from Phalerum to

Pentelicus lies in view, clear as an illuminated missal, in spite of the well of air, two thousand five hundred feet in depth, that swims between. Athens can be seen, but it looks only a group of infinitesimal dots and lines. Without the aid of opera-glasses I have made out the dark rectangular outline of the Acropolis, the lighter pyramidal form of the Parthenon, and the gleaming white houses of the town. The Bay of Salamis is clear, though Piræus is hidden behind hills. What a fine move of Thrasybulus to come up to this eyrie and wait for the moment when he could sweep eagle-like on his prey, to deliver the city from the tyrants!

It was the critical moment of the Peloponnesian War. A Persian garrison held Deceleia, a Spartan fleet was scouring the Attic coast. Euboea had fallen. Inside Athens the Thirty Tyrants had overthrown the democracy and had "slain in eight months more than the Peloponnesians slew in a war of ten years." They had even admitted a Spartan garrison within the sacred walls of the Acropolis. Up here in Phyle the upholders of democracy, exiled from their city, gathered round Thrasybulus, waiting till the hour came to strike. Once in midwinter the Tyrants led their forces up these narrow mountain gorges and besieged the stronghold, till one of those sudden blizzards, such as still sweep down on Athens from the Balkan highlands, blocked the mountain with snow and drove the army back to Athens. Again in May when all the country-side was at its gayest, the garrison on Phyle saw the Tyrants' hoplites moving towards them across the ridges of the Cephissian Plain. This time Thrasybulus led the exiles out of their stronghold and surprised the enemy as they rested at the village of Acharnæ, routing them with loss.

By this time the force round Thrasybulus seems to have grown to about a thousand men, and it can have been no easy matter to provision so large a force, even

in those game-haunted hills. He delayed no longer the final venture. It was still May when he led his army down from Phyle, crept round the city, and seized the hill of Munychia overlooking the Piræus. About this hill the battle was fought which ended the rule of the Tyrants. "The evil dream of Athens was over at last," says Professor Bury, "a year and a half of oligarchical tyranny and foreign soldiery on the Acropolis." This is one of those schoolboy stories that can be yawned over at home but which suddenly become dramatic—almost melodramatic—when read on the spot where the play was played.

We have climbed to Phyle many times. We have cowered beneath its massive walls for shelter from a wind, icy as that which drove the Thirty back to Athens, and we have crept into their shade from the heat of a May noonday. There are eagles now in the eyrie of Thrasybulus. They sweep their wings, dark above and light below, across the mountain gorges. The tinkle of sheep-bells comes from the edges of the precipice. You can hear the song of the charcoal-burners on the hidden Alp below. We passed them on our upward climb—two brown-skinned boys, bending over their heap of glowing wood. Behind them was the black pyramid of charcoal, the green turf studded with anemones, and the pine-trees ranged in climbing phalanx. At their feet a small stream cut its way through rocks that are worn smooth by the wheels of the wagons that brought food to the army of Thrasybulus.

Now and then the single note of a church bell comes from "Our Lady of the Gorge," a tiny hidden monastery perched on a shelf of rock above the torrent—a huddled group of buildings covered with whitewash and Byzantine paintings.

Above this monastery rises the tremendous cliff, famous in antiquity under the name of Harma—"the

Chariot." Its profile as seen from the Acropolis is striking, but bears more resemblance to the prow of a ship than to a chariot. At a certain time of year the priest of Apollo watched from the city wall of Athens until he saw lightning over Harma, and this was the signal for sending the "theoric ship." The episode of the ship is picturesque enough in itself, and that the moment of its despatch should be dependent on the first play of lightning round this purple ridge is glorious, even without the additional touch given by the mention of the watchman-priest on the city wall.

V

TWO CAVES OF PAN

The Cave of "Pan and the Nymphs" lies on Parnes close under the ridge of Harma. To reach it we left the train at Khasia and followed the path to Phyle as far as Our Lady of the Gorge. Our guide was a little, ugly, kind-faced man with a shock of curly hair, a big bushy beard streaked with white, and queer crooked legs cased in rolls of country cloth. From the monastery he led us by steep tracks for another hour and a half until we had walked right round Harma; then we found ourselves at a higher point in the same gorge: it is impossible to go straight up it from the monastery, for the stream has worn for itself a narrow channel between precipices. As it was we had a difficult scramble to the stream when we reached the gorge again; then we had to work our way along the watercourse, over boulders, and leaping from ledge to ledge, until at last there opened a sort of recess in the cliff.

By this time our guide had revealed himself. Pan is not dead. He still lives in Khasia, and though his goat's hoofs are hidden, they are sure enough over ground

where we fell again and again. We went up a hundred feet from the stream bed and found ourselves on a broad platform, over which fig-trees grow. It is enclosed by projecting wings of rock, perhaps 50 by 30 feet. There were niches for offerings cut in the rock-wall; here and there inscriptions spoke of the forgotten worship, but there was no cave, except that the cliff arched a little overhead. Then our guide went to the far right-hand corner, pulled aside the stem of a young fig-tree, and behold! a black chink through which we squeezed one at a time. And now a strange thing happened. Pan had been curiously reluctant to answer our questions, especially about some pottery which the Germans, who visited the place some twenty years ago, described as abounding in the cave. This, they said, had given it its modern name of *Lychnaritissa*—the Lamp Cave. Now Pan told us it was impossible to go further in; we should find water up to our necks. Luckily we had brought matches and a candle, and this baffled Pan. The candle showed no water but a good dry floor, extending inwards some twenty feet. We had also a trowel and Albanian knife; with these we dug, but found no pottery to speak of. Pan protested there was no pottery to be found and tried to hurry us out. Again we doubted him just in time, and saw, as our eyes became used to the shadow, a sort of arch high up on one side near the entrance. Up we went and discovered the real entrance to the real cave: what we were then in was a mere antechamber. This entrance was concealed by nature with a cunning imagined by no writer of romance. Once in the arch we saw before us a wide, deep pool: beyond it rose a kind of lip a few inches wide, which served to dam back another pool or cistern at a higher level; beyond this another, making a sort of stair of oblong water-troughs leading into the darkness.

Pan denied that there was anything within, but when with infinite care we had managed to stride over the first trough, the widest, and had crossed the others, we found ourselves again in a big cave nearly a hundred feet long. Out came knife and trowel again and we soon found Greek fragments ranging from black-figured onwards. Further suspicions aroused by loose earth outside were confirmed; it was plain that there had been systematic digging in the cave for years past, and the reason for Pan's reluctance to let us see the inside of the cavern was made plain.

Pan was sad when we came out, and he became sadder still on our regaining the top of the ridge, for he found that the mule had broken his tether and was feeding on a patch of green corn. It seems that the god has a little *choraphi* or plot of cornland here on the top of the hill, whence he can look down on the cave where he used to be honoured. The number of broken lamps of all periods, which almost make up the floor-soil for feet deep, suggest how many pilgrims must have come to the cave in spite of its inaccessibility.

At the monastery we had resined wine and Easter eggs on our way down. The Brothers showed us a two-handled drinking-cup, quite whole, a present from the contraband cave-diggers; and when we regained Pan's village (Khasia) and it became evident that though we had discovered his secret we had no intention of betraying it, the villagers became quite friendly. They gave us more resined wine, invited us to join their Easter festivities, and improvised queer Albanian verses in honour of the strangers who circled with them in the dance.

THE CAVE OF PAN NEAR VARI

The region round Hymettus is not often explored, partly because of its lack of trees, partly also from the

state of the roads at its base which make carriage-driving a penance. But it is easy to go on foot. The modern Athenians know it better than the tourist, for the little Bay of Voulagmeni with its strange salt lake is in summer crowded with families of bathers. The road which leads here from Athens, though bare, has a beautiful view of Hymettus on the one hand and the Gulf of Ægina on the other. It is also rich in classical remains; foundations, boundary-stones, and wells show that this was once an inhabited country. The Cave of Vari is beyond doubt the proper goal for any pilgrimage in this direction. It is one of the most delightful and most remote spots in Attica. Hidden away just over the crest of the last spur of the Hymettus range, the cave could never be discovered without a guide. It is in reality more of a pit than a cave, for the descent into it is almost perpendicular. A fig-tree growing out of the mouth is the solitary landmark that reveals its position among the low scrub of the hill-side. No wonder that the ancient Greeks saw here a haunt of Pan, Apollo, and the Nymphs, and that in later centuries it became a refuge for persecuted Christians. This was probably the Cave of the Nymphs on Hymettus that was visited by the parents of Plato. One day they brought with them their infant son and left him on the hill-side while they went into the cave to offer sacrifice. On their return they found the babe asleep, while on his lips had settled a cloud of bees—a prophecy of the honey-sweetness of the grown man's words. So says the legend of doubtful authenticity repeated by Ælianus and Olym-piodorus.

This Cave of Pan is not so inaccessible as that near Phyle, but it is well hidden. There is no royal road to Pan's sanctuaries. Here at Vari you grip the smooth silver bole of the fig-tree and drop into a dark hole. The guide who has gone before you plants your feet on something steep and slippery, and stepping down you

find yourself at the entrance of the cave proper, inside which there is an unmistakable shrine: rough carvings of Pan and the Nymphs with niches cut for lamps and offerings.

One cannot help wondering if the entrance was easier in Plato's day or if his parents also had to drop nine feet to reach the mouth of the cave. No wonder they thought it better to leave baby Plato outside in the myrtle thickets.

In February, 1900, the American School in Athens made excavations here. They found no prehistoric remains, but there was an inscription stating that this is the cave of "Archedemus a Nympholept." There was also evidence that the cave had been used continuously as a shrine from about 600 to 150 B.C. After this it was disused for four or five centuries, but in the fourth century A.D. it was once more made use of, this time as a Christian shrine. Through the Dark Ages the existence of the cave seems to have been forgotten except by the shepherds who came there for water. The roofs and walls are blackened by the smoke from their fires of wild thyme. It was rediscovered by Chandler in 1765.

These two caves to Pan and the Nymphs on Parnes and on Hymettus are alike in their utter loneliness. It was to the spirits of the solitude that the offerings in these shrines were made. "As the peasant of to-day," says Dr. Rouse, "fears the mysterious Neraidhes who can bewitch him to death or strike him deaf and dumb, or blind, so in ancient days the dweller in solitudes feared that panic-madness and nymph-stroke which the god and his woodland elves could plague him with."

Even to-day there can be an element of terror in the stillness of these mountain haunts. No singing birds, no rustle of friendly animal life in the shrubs around, no gentle chatter of frost-bound leaves in winter. I have

known it silent as a world of ghosts until the distant note of sheep-bells came to break the spell, a grateful relief. As the peasant in some distant nook of the Tyrol turns to the lonely crucifix that greets him at the head of the pass, so the solitary shepherd or huntsman of ancient Greece turned to the consolation of his religion to arm him against the panic madness that flies blindly from a nameless evil. That is the meaning of the thousand votive offerings in these two lonely shrines of Pan.

VI

THE TOMB AT MENIDI

The tomb at Menidi is a great domed house scooped out under the ground and lined with hewn stone. It lies within an hour's drive of Athens; one must make sure that the coachman knows the spot, for the tomb is hidden. A passage of massive masonry goes deep into the earth and leads to a high, narrow door with its pointed gable roof made of two stone slabs. Usually these so-called beehive tombs are built in a hill-side, but here there is hardly any slope in the ground, and one asks in vain why such an inconspicuous site was chosen for so notable a grave. The size and fine workmanship show that this was the tomb of some great ruler. Was this perhaps the country seat of the Mycenæan lords of Athens? In the days when what is now bare soil was covered with forests these lower slopes of Parnes would have been a pleasant refuge from the summer heats. Tatoï, the villa of the present King of Greece, is set in this direction, somewhat higher on the wooded slopes, and Cephissia, the summer resort of modern Athenians, is not far off. In classical times this district of Acharnæ was of strategic importance as barring the foot of one of the passes into Bœotia. Its chief village, Menidi, is still

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the home of charcoal-burners. Here on Easter Monday there are great dances of country people dressed in their best. These dances are as beautiful and less crowded than the more famous Easter dance at Megara.

In the Mycenæan Room in the National Museum at Athens there is a case containing the objects found in the tomb at Menidi. If the tomb was inconspicuous, it was nevertheless well known. The pottery found in it shows an unbroken succession of gifts from Mycenæan down to classical times. Through all these ages offerings were brought here and the tomb was venerated. Then, some time during the Dark Ages, the place was rifled. The body may have been lapped in gold leaf and may have had a thin gold mask over the face, such as we see in the Athens Museum brought from the graves at Mycenæ. In any case there was much to attract thieves. The body was carried away, and with it must have gone the more valuable contents of the grave. All that remained were the clay vases, a few beads and ornaments, and some small fragments of gold leaf. One delicate bit of ivory with carvings of winged beasts also escaped the robbers.

VII

CEPHISSIA AND TATOI

The train for this expedition starts from what is called by courtesy "the Cephissia station," but in reality the so-called station is a spot in the open street marked by four splendid palms. The little train stands snorting here till the horn blows, then it makes its way slowly through the streets of the town, the Patissia suburb, and up along the bed of the Cephissus. There is little water to be seen in the river, but the gorge is full of

fruit-trees. After fifteen minutes Heraklion is reached, a village colonized by Bavarians who were brought over by King Otho as an agricultural experiment. The German tongue is still heard in the village, but the number of colonists has dwindled and their experience has shown that peasants may be excellent husbandmen in their own country and yet fail to grapple successfully with new conditions.

After Heraklion the railway turns to the right and the climb towards Pentelicus begins. Fifty minutes after leaving Athens Cephissia is reached. Until lately this was a small village. Its plentiful water supply and cool breezes have now made it the fashionable summer-resort of the Athenians. Houses showing the most startling varieties of architecture have sprung up in great numbers, and are for the most part surrounded by charming gardens. In spring when the flowers are out, and before the season of bands and toilettes, it is a pleasant place to stay in and a good centre for expeditions around Pentelicus and Parnes. It is interesting to learn from Gellius that even in the days of the Roman Empire Cephissia was a summer resort for wealthy Athenians. He gives a delightful description of the country-house of Herodes Atticus :—

“Whilst I was staying in the schools of Athens, Herodes Atticus, the illustrious consul endowed with such talents of Greek oratory, often invited me to his country-houses in the neighbourhood of the town. He also invited Servilianus, a person of some distinction, and other compatriots who had come to Greece for the sake of culture. One day during the heats of early autumn he gathered us together in his country-house at Cephissia, where we found devices for combating the ardent fires of the day : thick shadow of deep woods, long walks of soft turf, buildings set to take advantage of the air, baths filled with fresh pure water, and

fountains whose murmur mingling with the song of birds made melodious this pleasant retreat."

The country-seat of Herodes has vanished, but this description would apply almost equally well to the summer residence of the present Greek Royal Family, which is placed a few miles further up the mountain at Tatoï.

The late King placed his villa and farm near the ancient Pass of Deceleia. It is an hour's drive from Cephissia and may be visited when the royal family are not in residence. The road passes first over open country, fragrant with thyme and heather, and with backward views of Athens seen across the plain. After the railway to Chalcis has been crossed the road begins to wind uphill, and the traveller accustomed to the arid slopes of Attica cannot but be astonished at the magnificent forests of oak and pine that mark the King's domain. The trees are not only plentiful but are also perfect individually and show how much might be done in Attica if proper care were taken of them. The King's forests are not wounded for resin, neither are they harmed by the fires which the shepherds wantonly light in other parts of Greece when they wish to secure a new piece of open country for their flocks. The villa itself stands high and there is a good view of the Acropolis and Lycabettus from the garden terrace. A small inn at the Palace gates gives good accommodation for a short visit. A prolonged stay is not allowed unless royal permission has been granted. From Tatoï the expedition to the top of Parnes and back can be accomplished in five hours.

Between Pentelicus and the plain of Marathon there is interposed a belt of wooded fort-hills which may be explored from Cephissia. A walk of seven miles round the northern flank of Pentelicus, past the modern marble quarries, brings you to the spot where Dionysus was first worshipped in Attica and where Thespis, a native of the hamlet, tried his first experiments in tragedy.

VIII

CORINTH

To count a day at Corinth as one of the days in Attica is hardly a contradiction. A visit to Corinth comes naturally to the tourist in Athens as a day of legitimate sightseeing. It is only fifty miles from Athens and the best trains manage the distance in something under three hours. The Patras express stops at Corinth and the knowing traveller alights to have the rum omelette for which the little refreshment-room is famous. The railway runs through modern Corinth, a town that is obviously one of Otho's failures. It was laid out in broad lines with open spaces and squares that would befit a capital. But all that has come to fit itself to this ambitious ground-plan is a smattering of low houses. It has a beautiful situation beside the Gulf, with Parnassus rising beyond it, and one regrets that it has been planned on these uncomfortably large lines. It might have made such a pretty village.

Old Corinth is four miles inland on gently rising ground at the foot of a huge "lion's head" Acropolis—a precipitous crag that one might call a knob if it were smaller. This is Acro-Corinth. It towers up above the bare plain, crowned with mediaeval fortifications, three lines of crenellated masonry, girdling walls and towers. Acro-Corinth is visible from Athens—one of the two "horns" of the Peloponnese, Mount Ithome, near Messene, being the other. These are not to be confused with the other Horns above Megara.

Ancient Corinth lies beneath this crag. The American School are excavating here and have laid bare the heart of the Roman city round about the early Greek temple of Apollo, of which half a dozen monolithic columns

are still upright. It has been a heart-breaking business for the excavators. The accumulations of earth in the last 1,500 years passes all belief. Again and again they have had to go down twenty feet before reaching the Roman pavement and the scanty remains of the Greek city lie five or ten feet lower still. The Roman plunderers left little of the splendours of Hellenic Corinth. The Roman city that rose on its ashes was gorgeous in a way, but generations of tasteless and slovenly Byzantine citizens gradually spoiled its best features and overlaid its streets and buildings with all sorts of vulgar accretions.

The Americans have a light railway that empties their "spoil-earth" on a "dump-heap" outside the central field of ruins; the mere mechanical task of removing the dug earth to a convenient distance keeps half their workmen busy; progress is slow, and finds comparatively few. But there are ecstatic moments. Once in a corner of the Agora the earth gave way and a digger tumbled into a chasm, from which he presently emerged, with eyes like saucers, crying, "Evreka kolonais! Evreka agalmata!" "I've found columns! I've found statues!"

This was a subterranean fountain-house with a roof supported by square piers. The statues were bronze lions' heads which served as water-spouts. In Greek days this place for drawing water had stood open and above ground; the reservoir is under a brow or overhanging crust of limestone which limits one side of the market-place. When the Roman Agora was built the pavement was laid six or more feet higher and the old fountain-house roofed and retained as a subterranean vault approached by a narrow stair.

Corinth had two larger and more famous fountains, Glauke and Pirene, and one can still see their rock-cut reservoirs and imagine their ancient splendour. But

for me, as for Strabo, the real Pirene is the spring near the summit of Acro-Corinth, where in the golden age Pegasus, the winged steed, came down to crop the grass and flowers that then surrounded it. Here, while he dallied too long one summer day, a hand was laid on his mane and the wild beautiful creature lost his freedom.

IX

CHALCIS

Since the opening of the new railway Chalcis can easily be visited in a day from Athens. After leaving the little junction of Schematari, the train runs quickly down the low hills that here skirt the shore. On approaching Chalcis there is a good view of the town with the heights of Eubœa behind and the narrow channel of the Euripos in the foreground. It is through these straits that there run those currents whose unaccountable ebb and flow have excited the wonder of philosophers from the earliest times and still remain an extraordinary natural phenomenon.

In classical times Chalcis was a rich commercial city, founder of many colonies, and the rival of Eretria in that struggle for the trade of the Black Sea routes, which influenced the early course of Hellenic history. Taken by Venice in 1209, it regained under her the commercial importance which it had lost under Rome. Under Turkish rule it formed the centre of a large agricultural district and had claims to be considered the capital of Greece. Here were the head-quarters of the Turkish Admiral Pasha ; and also the residences of the few rich landowners, among whom the property of the Island of Eubœa was divided. Recent demolition of the walls has merged the old town (still locally known as the *Castro*) with the new

residential quarter which has grown up along the North harbour.

In the Southern harbour much of the Venetian fortification still remains. Even without the bas-reliefs of St. Mark's Lion, which have now been removed to the local museum, there is no mistaking the steep walls that rise abruptly from the water. They are quite typical Venetian work.

The Church of Hagia Paraskevi dates originally from the early Byzantine period.¹ In form it is a wide basilica, and there are remains of beautiful decoration in the interior. Two columns stand outside the west entrance. These were within the church until the earthquake of 1853 threw down the old façade, which was afterwards rebuilt behind them. The original building extended from beyond the pillars now outside the doors to the square piers which occur between the third and fourth columns of the interior. The later building (east of the piers) has wider intercolumniations, and a ground-level at least two feet higher than the old church in which the bases of the columns have sunk out of sight. This second church is to a certain extent dated by the tombstone of Lippamanus, a Venetian nobleman, whose tablet in the wall of the North chapel bears the date 1398.

In both periods the decoration is an interesting feature. The monogram of Christ on the pair of columns second from the door dates not only this church but other similar capitals in Athens, Previsa, Argos, and Acro-Corinth,

¹ There has been some controversy as to the date of the original building. Stephani, followed by others, assigned it to the end of the Byzantine period. Strzygowsky on the evidence of the capitals has shown that it cannot be later than the sixth or seventh century (*Ath. Mitt.* xiv. 271), and this view is now generally accepted. Probability would point to its having been erected in the time of Justinian while his architects were dispersed throughout the country engaged in the systematic fortification of the Empire (*Deltion, Hist. and Ethn. Soc.*, vol. ii. 711-28).

which might otherwise be taken for pre-Christian work. In the south chapel there is beautiful Gothic vaulting, the corbels carved with a free and flowing rendering of violet and convolvulus-leaf, ivy, or vine, and the keystones bearing elaborate bosses. A curious bust is kept in a dusty cupboard near the entrance. It is a severe and somewhat beautiful representation of the Virgin, and probably dates from the fifth or sixth century, that is to say before the time of the iconoclasts.

Of the Turkish town much remains to be seen. The old fountain under its plane-tree is one of the best specimens of a type to be found wherever the Turk has been. A fine house overlooking the southern harbour may well have been the residence of the Admiral Pasha. The rooms are large and light. Doors and doorways have been elaborately carved and gilded, the ceilings are of painted wood covered with bamboo trellis-work, while round walls and ceilings run wooden mouldings, with delicate floral designs on a gold background. When we visited this house we found it inhabited by a family of Hebrew children who pattered barefoot through the rich, empty chambers, while cold sea-breezes blew in through the unglazed windows. The mother had a small nucleus of household property in the kitchen below, but in the large upper rooms there was no furniture beyond a fine old oak cradle and a frame for winding wool. In these ideal nurseries the children passed their days with no plaything but a sportive kitten. Throughout the town many smaller Turkish houses may be noticed. There are also four mosques and an old bath-house. For many years after the revolution Turks and Jews continued to live in the *Castro*, while the Greeks kept to the new town. There are no Turks to be seen now, but Chalcis is still the home of a considerable Jewish colony.

A small local museum in the new town contains some

interesting archaic sculptures recently found in the temple of Apollo at Eretria. The group of a hero carrying off a maiden is particularly noteworthy, and the torso of Athena which stands beside it probably filled the centre of the pediment.

All this can be seen in one day. If the traveller has time to spare he will find a passable inn, and a stay of two or three days will enable him to visit the ruins of ancient Eretria and also to see something of northern Euboea with its varied scenery of mountain, river, and woodland.

There are many other expeditions in Attica. Marathon, Salamis, Ægina, and Sunium are not likely to be overlooked. They will be pressed upon you by coachmen, boatmen, and hotel-keepers, if the magic of their names has not proved by itself of sufficient enticement. And there are less known spots, the memories of which would make me spin out this long chapter for another dozen pages. There is Rhamnus with the white foundations of its remote temples set deep among the evergreen thorns from which the place takes its name; and there are the ancient marble-quarries on Pentelicus. When you weary of classical associations there is always the Zoo at old Phalerum where you can see other bored foreigners — flamingoes, chimpanzees, or giraffes — silhouetted against a background of Hymettus purple. Last and best and most refreshing of all there is the view from the top of each of the three sister mountains, revealing a wilder aspect of this inexhaustible Attica.

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